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XMAS BOOKS SPECIAL

New Statesman

29 November 1985

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BRITAIN'S BOMB

WHERE ARE THE NUKES?

DUNCAN CAMPBELL: EXCLUSIVE

ANDREW LUMSDEN: Safe Sex

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A PAY-AS-YOU-ENTER BUS IS NO HELP WHEN YOU'RE GETTING ON.

Bus conductors don't just take your money.

They take your arm when you're old and trying to get up the step.

They take a young woman's baby buggy while she struggles with the baby.

And they take care of any trouble on the top deck when the rest of us don't want to get involved.

Despite this, pay-as-you-enter buses, which have no conductor, are in widespread use.

Now it's planned to run more of them in Central London.

So the problems these buses have already caused shoppers, pregnant women, disabled people and the old will be repeated and magnified.

So too will the fare dodging and vandalism they bring.

Even if you don't use public transport you're sure to notice the difference.

It takes four times longer for people to get on a pay-as-you-enter bus.

Because they have to do just that – pay as they enter. (Even if you have a bus pass it has to be checked by the driver.)

And the longer a bus stops the longer the queue of traffic behind it.

So if you travel around the capital by road you'll face delays of some sort.

London Regional Transport maintains that these buses save money.

But they also lose money simply because people avoid using them if they possibly can.

When people use buses less, many of them use cars more.

Which adds still further to traffic congestion, road accidents and pollution.

All of which cost money.

In the meantime fewer jobs for conductors mean more people drawing the dole.

When you add it all up it seems we're paying a heavy price for pay-as-you-enter buses.

CAPITAL TRANSPORT CAMPAIGN

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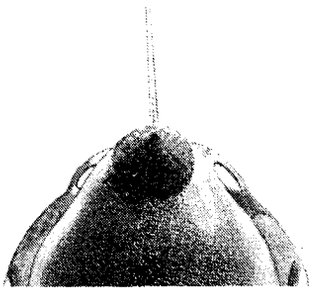
New Statesman



Cover drawing: Leon Kuhn

Where are our nukes? DUNCAN CAMPBELL's exclusive revelations of the gap between the bluff and reality of Britain's Bomb 10

HOME

Jolyon Jenkins: Police powers 8
Peter Kellner: The Left's secret Thatcherites 9
Andrew Lumsden: Tories and gay men 14
Christian Wolmar: SERPS 15
Colm Toibin: Ireland 15
Ian Williams: Liverpool 16

FOREIGN

Howard Barrell: Will they free Nelson Mandela? 20
Claudia Wright: Spies 21
T.M. Pasca: Vatican 22

WEEKEND

Adewale Maja-Pearce: Why is Nigeria corrupt? 26

BOOKS

David Lancaster: Legends 28
Clive Davis: Native sons 29
Ben Okri: Fiction 30
Geoff Dyer: John Berger 31
John Spurling: Art books 32
Michael Hofmann: Thomas 34
Glyn Hughes: Fiction 34
Nicci Gerrard: Four women 35
Rupert Christiansen: Ann Fleming 37
James Simmons: Poem 37
Shorter reviews 38

ARTS

John Coleman: Films 39
Jules Lubbock: Housing co-ops 40
Biba Kopf: Music 40
John Spurling: Barcelona 42
Benedict Nightingale: Edgar and Jellicoe in Dorchester 43

BACKCHAT

Madeleine Harmsworth: By bike from Beijing 44
Naseem Khan: Work in progress 45
Hugo Williams: Television 45
Weekend competition 46
Crossword 46

PLUS

Ralph Steadman 8
Mediawatch: Francis Wheen 18
Slump 18
Diary: Islander 19
Roger Woddis 19
This England 22
Letters 24
John Minnion 24
Viewpoint: Ros Coward 25
Janis Goodman 51
Chess: George Botterill 51
Quiz 51

NEXT WEEK

FINISH YOUR PLATE, DARLING

Torn between sound medical advice and advertising blandishments we need, says JUDY SADGROVE, to 'retrieve the lost power to choose what we eat' — if only farming giantism and artificial produce prices would let us

ALL DRESSED UP

MARY HARRON reviews *Adorned in Dreams*, Elizabeth Wilson's study of women's fashion

MOONIE LEFT

Two former inmates describe parallels between religious cults and the WRP, which has just expelled leader Gerry Healy over a sex scandal

FARRAKHAN RISING

The Muslim minister Louis Farrakhan ('Hitler was a great man') is becoming the most controversial black American leader since Malcolm X died MANNING MARABLE reports

NOW SHOWING

JUDITH WILLIAMSON on the London Film Festival

New Statesman

Vol 110 No 2853 29 November 1985

Yes, we haven't many nukes

THIS WEEK we reveal the truth about Britain's so-called independent nuclear deterent. It presently consists of one submarine out of our Polaris fleet of four (one on patrol, one off and two in the wash).

We shall never have enough operational warheads to put in all the Trident missile submarines, if we are mad enough to go on with the Trident project. Meanwhile, a small stock of increasingly aged warheads are regularly convoyed round the country for the navy and, if our army or air force wanted to take on any nuclear role, they would have to ask the Americans to supply them.

These revelations may come as something of a shock to the peace movement. Successive British governments for decades, it seems, have pretended that we are much more of a nuclear power than we in fact are. (The French independent *force de frappe* is presumably even more pretentious.)

In fact, though, to know the truth about the British nuclear deterent only adds pragmatic and military arguments to the already overwhelming moral and political case against it. A scenario in which there is a bilateral eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, where our possession of one submarine on patrol would make the slightest difference to reality, is such an incredible scenario that no sensible military planning could possibly be based upon it. The desire in Whitehall and government to hang on to our nuclear military role at any cost is a relic of past world power status that would be pathetic, if it were not so dangerous and so expensive.

The revelation of how small and antiquated is our nuclear stockpile might be embarrassing for this government to have to reveal, if it ever became engaged in disarmament negotiations with the Soviet Union. (Given the proportion of the defence budget that goes on the nuclear programme, there might also be some problems at a different level with the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.)

But the facts serve to focus the peace movement's attention on the real nuclear issues so far as the United Kingdom is concerned. First, two hundred nuclear warheads is still a massive nuclear arsenal, even in a world where the superpowers count theirs in tens of thousands — and it should be done away with. Second, they underline the fact that the overwhelming nuclear presence in this country is not British, but American.

That is where the real military threat lies and that is where the real political problems will have to be faced. □

Caspar is still in on the act

WE ARE STILL in the afterglow of that Geneva summit. A· must still be counted for gain that President Reagan ' enough of the other side no longer to think and ' General Secretary of the Soviet Union as the S Empire.

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But what are we left with of substance? Last week in the *NS* Jack Mendelsohn, who was a member of two successful American disarmament negotiating teams, set out five tests by which any real advance after the summit might be measured.

Renewed commitment to the unratified SALT II and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty are essential to preserve what is left of superpower arms control. We did not get even that from the summit. But the key for the future is that the United States should back down on the Star Wars project. There is not the slightest indication that the President is prepared to do that and every reason to suppose that the vested interests of the military-industrial complex will put the greatest pressure on him to stand firm.

Both sides have taken the position that the issue is non-negotiable. The only possible logical compromise is that the United States should, in reaffirming its commitment to the ABM Treaty, undertake that there would be no deployment of space weapons — that the SDI project should be confined to research. But there was not even a hint of this minimal compromise at Geneva and the reality of the arms race is that successful research inevitably leads to irresistable pressures for deployment.

None of the post-summit public relations effort gave any indication that the Reagan team understood any better the Moscow view of the world, which is that of being an empire on the defensive. The essence of the hawkish anti-Soviet position that continues to dominate the thinking, if not the presentation, of the Reagan Administration was contained in the now notorious leaked letter that Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger sent to the President immediately before Geneva.

Weinberger wrote: 'Even a probable territorial defense [against missiles by the Soviet Union] would require us to increase the number of our offensive forces and their ability to penetrate Soviet defenses to assure that our operational plans could be executed.' And dealing with his highly dubious assertions that the Soviet Union has been violating the terms of arms control treaties, he wrote: '. . .a less than forceful response to the [Soviet] violations would undermine any serious diplomatic endeavour to improve the US-USSR relationship, in the arms control and other arenas. It may appear paradoxical that the key to improved US-Soviet relations is a vigorous response by the US to Soviet treaty violations. But it is no more so than the observation that the key to domestic peace is a police force ready to exert itself to preserve the law'.

We know that Gorbachev strikes his Western counterparts as 'someone you can do business with'. We have no way of knowing what impression Reagan made on Gorbachev. But the General Secretary is clearly shrewd and what he saw must have worried him a great deal.

President Reagan's capacity to swing the American political machine in a new direction over arms control and to take American public opinion with him, even if that is what he really wants to do, is extremely limited. After the 1986 mid-term elections that capacity will become even more limited, as he slides into being a lame duck president nearing the end of his second term. The objective realities after Geneva remain extremely gloomy, however warm the afterglow. □

THIRD WORLD COMMUNICATIONS

MANAGING EDITOR

A Managing Editor is required for Third World Communications (TWC), publishers of Third World Book Review. TWC is an exciting new venture aimed at promoting Third World writers and publishers and developing a Third World information network. Applicants for this post should have a knowledge of and commitment to the Third World. He or she should have proven journalistic experience at a senior level and should feel comfortable in academic circles. The successful applicant will have overall responsibility for the production of TWC publications, including commissioning articles, liaising with contributors, sub-editing and writing.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

TWC is also seeking an efficient, enthusiastic Editorial Assistant. His or her responsibilities will include day-to-day running of the office, general secretarial duties, proof reading and liaising with the typesetter and printer. A knowledge of Third World affairs, although not essential, is preferable.

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER

TWC is also looking for an Advertisement Manager for Third World Book Review and Third World Women's News. Applicants for the post should have experience and a knowledge of and interest in the Third World is desirable.

February 1, 1986 is the starting date for all positions. Conditions of service are negotiable. Please send full curriculum vitae to The Publisher, Kwame Nkrumah House, 173 Old Street, London EC1V 9NJ.

Closing date: 30 December 1985.

Shoot out at Luqa

THERE IS something very odd about the sequence of events that led to the massacre of 59 people from the EgyptAir Boeing 737 at Luqa airport in Malta on Sunday. The official American reaction is also odd, particularly since it seems that US intelligence had advance knowledge that there was about to be another skyjack in the Middle East.

Last summer, when the Lebanese successfully negotiated the ending of the TWA hijacking in Beirut with the loss of only one life, the Reagan Administration lambasted both the Lebanese and the Greek governments (the plane had taken off from Athens) and imposed sanctions against both Athens and Beirut airports. Again this year, when the Italians and the Egyptians negotiated the end of the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro*, again with the loss of only one life, Washington lashed out at both the Italian and the Egyptian governments, called President Mubarak a liar, themselves skyjacked an EgyptAir flight (by chance it was the same plane that ended up in the Luqa disaster) and provoked a major Italian political crisis, temporarily bringing down the Craxi government.

Yet this time, after what was quite clearly a bungled operation undertaken before other now routine hijacking procedures had been exhausted, the Reagan Administration instantly 'commended' it. It is hard to believe that would have been the reaction if any of the passengers had been American citizens. The Greek government is clearly unhappy and unconvinced by the attempt to rewrite the story of the episode so as to suggest that the Egyptian commandos had no alternative.

It is still also unclear who the hijackers were. They certainly did not behave like normal hijackers. They appear to have made no demands, beyond the request that the Boeing be refuelled, which is also slightly odd since it must still have had enough to get to Algeria, Tunisia or Libya. The reports that the hijackers were systematically killing passengers has not been substantiated. The bodies that were first dumped on the tarmac at Luqa were those of the EgyptAir sky marshalls and the hijacker, who had all been killed in the original shoot out. The hijackers then released eleven women and a man who had been wounded in the shooting, which does not fit the picture of deliberate mass murderers.

It begins to look as if the Egyptians decided at a very early stage that they would shoot this one out and, having bungled it, are now trying desperately to pretend that the whole thing was a Libyan inspired plot. Given American fixation with Colonel Gadafi, Washington has seemed only too willing to go along with that version. □

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CEGB LAYS ON A SHOW FOR PADDY ASHDOWN

PADDY ASHDOWN, Liberal MP for Yeovil, is asking the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) awkward questions over safety at Britain's Magnox nuclear reactors. As ROB EDWARDS reports below, the Board is responding by treating him to a 'presentation' at Hinkley Point A power station. Right, JUDITH COOK reports on a second accident at Hinkley B station, in which Ashdown is also taking a close interest

PR at Hinkley A

THE HIGH-LEVEL presentation is being made on the orders of Energy Secretary Peter Walker. Senior representatives from the CEGB and the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate will be trying to allay Ashdown's alarm about problems with the long term safety reviews of Britain's ageing Magnox reactors when he visits the Hinkley Point A nuclear station in Somerset on Monday (2 December).

Ashdown has previously accused the government and the nuclear industry of jeopardising safety because of delays in completing the major reviews planned for Magnox stations after 20 years operation. Although the CEGB's two oldest reactors at Berkeley and Bradwell celebrated their twentieth birthdays in 1982, their safety reviews have still not been finished. The same applies to the South of Scotland Electricity Board's Magnox station at Hunterston, which was 20 years old last year.

According to some sources, all the Magnox safety reviews, including those for the two which are 20 this year — Hinkley Point A and Trawsfynydd — may not be completed for another five to seven years.

The main reason for the delays is the acute staffing crisis that has long afflicted the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate. The enforced relocation of two sections of the Inspectorate (including the one responsible for the Magnox reviews) from London to Bootle in September has seriously depleted its effective workforce and damaged its already low morale.

According to the staff trade union, the Institute of Professional Civil Servants (IPCS), nine of the 50 or so inspectors in these sections have resigned or retired since January this year. In a ballot organised two months ago by the IPCS the inspectors rejected taking strike action against the relocation by just four votes.

Ashdown is now also concerned that even if the safety reviews had taken place in time, they would still have been inadequate. He points out that no physical inspections are made to check the reactor's crucial safety feature — the integrity of its steel pressure vessel. He claims that paper exercises and computer models are relied upon instead. ●

UPP

Mr Ashdown — the Liberal MP to whom the NS can be nice

Problems at Hinkley B

THE FIRST accident occured on 25 October when water leaked from a fractured input pipe into the reactor core (*NS* 8 November). On 20 November another pipe, this time carrying carbon dioxide coolant, also broke, and 28 tons of carbon dioxide leaked away. The safety valve which should have shut off the supply of carbon dioxide froze as the cold gas escaped and was stuck open. This time the CEGB released news of the accident within 48 hours. Their spokesperson said that the gas wasn't irradiated and there was no cause whatsoever for concern. He declined to appear on the local TSW television news.

While Hinkley B was off stream after the first accident, CEGB spokespersons told both TSW and the *NS* that there had been no leak of radiation whatsoever as a result of the accident. But the director of a consultancy firm which specialises in this kind of engineering tells the *NS* that there must have been some kind of release. Paddy Ashdown (who's the local MP) has demanded in the House of Commons to be told whether or not there had been a radiation leak, and this week he received an admission from the Department of the Environment that there had been a leak into the atmosphere on 25 October but that the CEGB considered it to be within safety limits.

Ashdown now says he doesn't know what to believe about either accident. 'You need a jemmy to prise information out of the CEGB,' he says. ●

Hong Kong deal 'leaves grave nationality problems'

THOUSANDS of Hong Kong residents will be made effectively stateless under the proposed nationality arrangements for handing the colony back to China in 1997, according to a report published this week by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI). The proposals — in the form of a draft Order in Council — are being discussed in Hong Kong this week and will be debated in parliament next month.

Two JCWI workers, Anne Owers and Raman Ruparell, spend ten days in the colony this summer discussing the proposals with representatives from all sections of government and the community. At a press conference to launch the report, titled a *A Question of Belonging*, they said that even among strongly pro-China residents of the colony there was deep disquiet about the insecurity that the proposed arrangements will create: 'The vast majority of people want to stay in Hong Kong, but they also want some insurance in case things go wrong', they said. And they accused politicians from all parties of being so relieved that the 'Hong Kong question' had been settled that they were prepared to ignore the real problems that remain.

The main concern is over the 10,000 British nationals who are not ethnically Chinese and so won't be elegible for Chinese citizenship. In common with other Hong Kong British they are to be granted the new status of 'British Nationals (Overseas)' which the report describes as 'meaningless and unclear...[and] which China regards only as a temporary travel facility'. It gives no right of abode anywhere in the world and cannot be passed on to children. The report argues that these people should be given full British Citizenship.

Perhaps surprisingly, it doesn't argue that *all* Hong Kong British Nationals should be made full British Citizens. Instead it suggests that the provision to register for citizenship that has already been conceded to government employees (who might fear for their safety after transition) 'should be extended to other British nationals in Hong Kong'. But it backs away from suggesting what the criteria for such an extension should be, saying simply that they should be 'clearly specified'.

The authors deny that their proposals would lead to a massive influx of Chinese into Britain. They point out that ethnic Chinese living in the Portugese colony of Macau 40 miles away — whose return to China is also being negotiated — already have full right of abode in Portugal and that when Portugal joins the EEC they will also have the right to settle and work in Britain.

Jolyon Jenkins

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A £4.6m BONUS? THAT'S THE WONDER OF WOOLIES

AS THE stock market hit record highs this week, we offer our third round-up of the monstrous piles of loot threatening to engulf the 'captains of industry', the same captains who urged each other at the CBI conference last week to pay 'nowt for nowt'. JOHN RENTOUL susses them out

SHARE OPTION schemes were rare in Britain until August 1984, when the government subsidised them through tax concessions on approved schemes. Now nearly every board of directors has got one.

Disregarding the 34 share options we have mentioned worth between £250,000 (top premium bond prize) and our £1 million cut-off point, there are now 13 directors on our scoreboard. Most of the additions since our last round-up (14 June) are Woolworth directors, who have seen their share price rise from 278p to 610p this year.

But pity poor Peter Frimston-Williams, Woolworth's deputy chairperson. At the end of October he exercised most of his options at 507p, collecting a clear £799,200. But if he'd held on for just a few more weeks, he could have made £148,000 more out of the shares' recent rise. Other newcomers to the table:

● Ralph Halpern of Burtons, who did very nicely out of taking over Debenhams, thankyou, and cashed in £1.7 million last week. He still has over £3 million-worth left, although he can't cash them in until December next year.

● Sir Eric Sharp of Cable and Wireless, who breaks the million-pound barrier as his shares were boosted by OFTEL's ruling in favour of his Mercury subsidiary against British Telecom.

But price of place in this league table of inconspicuous but stupendous potential wealth (options are only *rights* to buy shares at a bargain price) must go to No 2, John Beckett, Woolworth's chairperson, whose brother Sir Terence told the CBI (of which he is Director-General) last week:

> The upward pressures on pay increases have never been lower. Those in work have really had their increases at the expense of those out of work. We should seek the complete elimination of pay increases that are not related to achieved increases in the output of goods or services.

Have a word with your brother, Tel. *Then* tell us about your 'compassion for the unemployed' ●

Politics of envy scoreboard

Millionaire Share Option Schemes

Director	Company	Potential Profit
1. **Glen Renfrew**	*Reuters*	£5,932,703
2. **John Beckett**	*Woolworth*	£4,636,663
3. **Victor Monk**	*Charterhouse*[1]	£3,657,881
4. **Ralph Halpern**	*Burton*	*£3,106,311[2]
5. **Michael Nelson**	*Reuters*	£1,952,535
6. **Brian Hellings**	*Hanson Trust*	£1,513,725
7. **Geoffrey Mulcahy**	*Woolworth*	*£1,281,862
8. **Colin Brown**	*Woolworth*	£1,273,520
9. **Richard Harker**	*Woolworth*	£1,273,520
10. **Sir Eric Sharp**	*Cable & Wireless*	*£1,165,956
11. **Lord Hanson**	*Hanson Trust*	£1,073,693
12. **Allen Foster**	*Woolworth*	£1,064,642
13. **Eric Parker**	*Trafalgar House*	*£1,018,359

Source: latest company accounts

Notes

Potential gain from share options calculated using the share price at its 1985 high (directors will only cash them in when the shares are doing well).

1 Woolworth options: Charterhouse Japhet led a shareholder buyout of Woolworth from its US parent; Monk was the Charterhouse director responsible for organising it.

2 plus £1,662,000 from options exercised last week.

* includes some options (assumed to be) granted under the 'tax efficient' provisions of the 1984 Finance Act; total shows the minimum profit as if it were to be paid in taxed salary.

Edinburgh applies to join the Cuddly Left

IT NOW SEEMS unlikely that Labour-controlled Edinburgh District Council will engage in another major confrontation with the government next year, as previously forecast (New Statesman 2 August 1985). There are three main reasons for this: changing strategic perceptions within the party, lower interest rates, and the goverment's apparent willingness to take a softer line with the council.

According to one version, the so-called 'cuddly' or pragmatic left's newly-confirmed dominance within the party will be the crucial factor in ensuring that Edinburgh does not follow Lambeth or Liverpool over the brink by going illegal next year. The 'cuddly' advocates contend that there has been a major shift away from the 'bunker politics' of the Labour Group leader Alex Wood and Group Secretary Jimmy Burnett.

In support they cite two district party meetings last week at which the leadership's position on three specific aspects of policy — housing action areas, decentralisation and local economic initiatives — was narrowly defeated. Although the coded and at times fierce debate that led up to these decisions would have completely baffled outsiders, there is no doubt that an important political and, to a lesser extent, personal struggle was taking place.

Perhaps 1987 then?

Alex Wood concedes that he has lost this round of the argument within the party, but points out that it is outside factors like interest rates and the government's attitude which have allowed activists the luxury of debate. The year after next is when he now thinks the crunch will come and the party will be forced to make the really hard choices.

The cuddly tendency's creative accountancy measures implemented earlier this year to avoid a confrontation with the law mean that Edinburgh is likely to start next year with a surplus of £1-£3 million. The Scottish Office has already increased the council's general services guideline from £35.7 to £38.5 million and only marginally reduced its rate fund contribution. And the council should manage to avoid any other spending penalties because of its compliance with guidelines this year.

In fact the outlook is so rosy that it might even be theoretically possible to reduce the rates without cutting jobs or services; or — more likely — to plan for a little growth and a relatively low rates increase. Such options are viewed enthusiastically, especially in the light of Labour's ambition to regain control of Lothian Regional Council in next May's local elections.

Rob Edwards

Controversy rages over VDU 'health hazards'

EIGHT Labour MPs are backing a move by the newly formed VDU Workers' Rights Campaign for legislation limiting the number of hours that any worker spends on VDU work. This follows evidence that prolonged exposure to VDU screens can damage health.

The MPs are tabling an early day motion to limit the number of hours worked by a VDU operator to four per day with rest breaks after every hour. They want pregnant women, and women contemplating pregnancy, to have an automatic right of transfer to non-VDU work. And they say that the government should fund research into the possible link between VDU work and a host of medical disorders ranging from backache and eye cataracts to heart disease.

The Campaign held its first conference in London at the weekend with more than 150 VDU operators, mostly women, hearing Bob De Matteo of the Ontario Public Services Employees' Union, outlining the legislation that has been introduced in Canada, Sweden, Norway, West Germany and a number of American states.

De Matteo, who has negotiated numerous 'new technology' agreements with Canadian employers, says that 'industry always lies about the health hazards facing workers, and government rarely tells the truth'.

Referring to attempts by the computer industry and 'its friends in the media', to 'rubbish' the health hazards faced by VDU operators he asked why workers in more than 30 countries were reporting similar medical complaints if they were no dangers: 'If there are no hazards then we are witnessing mass hysteria amongst VDU workers across 3 continents', he said.

Delegates were visibly shocked when he demonstrated, with the aid of a DIY tool for detecting concealed electric cables, that a measurable quantity of radiation was 'leaking' from a VDU in the conference hall. Five years ago the computer firms denied that radiation could leak from their machines, he said. Now they deny that the leaks can do any damage.

About 70 per cent of the VDUs used in the UK are shielded with a conductive web shield which reduces the radiation leakage. The 30 per cent that are not include the most popular home computers. The Campaign wants the Government to outlaw unshielded machines. Tony Webb of the Campaign says that home computer owners shouldn't panic because shields are easily, and cheaply, available.

Many experts are, however, sceptical about the alleged dangers of VDUs. Professor John Sparks of the technology department at the OU, tells the NS *it is unlikely that the radiation leakage from VDUs could cause much damage because they use a fairly low voltage. He couldn't see that the danger from VDUs could be any greater than that from television sets.*

Barry Hugill

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Bhopal one year on, and still no compensation

Popperfoto

Bhopal residents huddle outside Hamida hospital waiting to be treated for chest and eye injuries

THIS TUESDAY (3 December) sees the anniversary of the Bhopal disaster — the worst ever chemical accident — which killed an estimated 5,000 people and severely injured another 20,000. Last week Indian lawyers representing some of the victims — most of whom are still waiting for compensation — were touring Europe putting the case against Union Carbide.

'Secrecy and cutting costs on safety were the main cause of the tragedy', says Bombay lawyer Mr Anand Grover. 'There certainly were avoidable deaths'.

Relief workers in Bhopal now believe that as well as the highly toxic Methyl Isocyanate (MIC), two other gases that have been used as chemical weapons, Hydrogen Cyanide and Phosgene, were also present. Many lives could have been saved if that information had been available to doctors a year ago, argues Grover.

'MIC decomposes at high temperatures into various constituents, one of which is Hydrogen Cyanide', says. There are recognised antidotes for Cyanide poisoning but they weren't given because at that stage only MIC was supposed to be present.

Union Carbide still insists that when water leaked into the storage tank containing MIC, temperatures did not reach the level at which Hydrogen Cyanide would be released. 'We are almost certain chemically that Cyanide couldn't have been given off', said Dr Nathan Zutty, chairman of Union Carbide in Europe.

Whatever the cause, Bhopal citizens are still suffering from the gas leak. 'People have breathlessness, loss of memory, and defective vision and women's periods are affected', said Dr Nishith Vohra, of the Bhopal People's Clinic.

In June a US court instructed Union Carbide to make an interim $5 million payment for the relief of the victims while litigation about final compensation was pursued. But so far the terms on which the company has offered that money have not been acceptable to the Indian authorities.

The only payment Union Carbide has actually made is a million dollars to the Indian national government in December 1984. If there's no out of court settlement, legal proceedings over compensation and punitive damages in the US could easily take ten years.

John Tanner

DoE goes back on its word

LAST WEEK the Department of the Environment announced its £15 million allocation to local authorities who had put in bids to continue funding those voluntary organisations which are going to be affected by GLC and Metropolitan County abolition.

Despite assurances given by government spokesperson Lord Elton during the passage of the abolition bill that there was no desire for any general cut in the funding of voluntary activity, it's clear that many groups will suffer as a differential between Labour and Conservative boroughs appears.

Apart from one or two exceptions, Labour authorities have been granted 27.5 per cent of what they asked for, while Tory areas got 41 per cent and the Liberal one 38 per cent. The DoE's justification for this is that it depended on whether the area put in a 'considered' bid rather than submitting a total list currently funded by the GLC.

On the face of it, Tory boroughs made this 'considered' bid. But Croydon, Hammersmith and Fulham didn't and were still awarded 41 per cent of their bids. Voluntary organisations now feel that Lord Elton's assurances now ring hollow.

Paul Sommerfield

Paul Sommerfield is director of the London Voluntary Service Council.

MISCELLANY

A little embroidery

The February 1974 general election, as older readers will recall, saw Enoch Powell telling the electorate not to vote Tory. On the whole they didn't. Powell remembered the event to the Channel Four programme *The Writing on the Wall* a couple of weeks ago: 'Having risen at my customary hour of seven, going down, tiptoeing down, and reading the words "Heath's Gamble . . ." Heath's Gamble? I thought. *Gamble?* So I pulled it through and it fell out flat on the mat: "Heath's Gamble Fails". So I took it up with me to the bathroom and sang the Te Deum.' There's something not quite right with the story — why hadn't Powell heard the results on the radio, for example? — and the programme's researchers went to the files to find a copy of the paper. They discovered that *no such headline ever appeared.* Powell, no doubt, has other things on his mind just now, but shouldn't he be worried about this capacity for total recall of wholly fictitious events?

Who wants to know?

Life in small Tory towns, part 24. Ivor Thomas, citizen and elector, went to the town hall in Lichfield to ask about the planned £1 million extension to the council offices, which includes a nuclear bunker. He asked who the builders were

and when they were due to start. A council officer told him. The next afternoon two police officers arrived on his doorstep asking if there was going to be a demonstration against the bunker-building. Thomas is a member of CND and the Labour Party and quite well known to council officers, but he's never organised any demonstrations.

Coming up for air

Peace groups in Tayside, however, have been hitting back: a couple of weekends ago they assembled at local Royal Observer Corps nuclear bunkers where training exercises were taking place, and did all the proper things like planting trees and decorating the places with balloons. They also had also some interesting chats with ROC volunteers — many of whom were refreshingly undisciplined in their responses. 'The air is so foul down there after five hours you *have* to come up,' complained one. 'Actually the exercise isn't going too well,' admitted another: 'Our communications aren't working properly'. ('This fucking pump isn't working!' came muffled cries from within the bunker.) One volunteer emerged to eat his sandwiches, explaining: 'It's too cold inside.' In view of the evident fact that they wouldn't be able to cope with running a bunker *and* participating in a nuclear war, the most sensible reply came from a volunteer who said: 'if it came down to it, no I probably wouldn't come down here — I'd stay with my family.'

Shopping expeditions

We have obtained private, incontrovertible evidence of how little William Casey, director of the CIA, is in control of his outfit. It was while Casey was shopping at an exclusive establishment that does for Washington what the Harrods Food Hall does for London. His black limousine sat outside, bristling with antennae, while his bodyguards, square-chested men wearing mock-Harris tweed coats and intercom tubes in their ears, held their shopping baskets discreetly at a distance. Casey stopped at the bread counter and surveyed the wares as he waited second in line. But whether it was the queue or his flagging appetite he decided to push off, and snarled 'OK boys, let's go' as he strode empty-handed through the exit. But this was too fast for one of the bodyguards who had filled his shopping basket and was waiting in line to pay. When Casey gave his order, the bodyguard didn't budge, but held up his basket, as if to say: 'Can't you see I'm busy?'

Dog's life

Another curiosity about Judge Michael Argyle, thanks to whom police can now say to football supporters 'move along there, or you'll get life'. *Dog World* reported the standing ovation he got at the Lord Mayor's Banquet at the Guildhall two weeks ago. *Dog World*? The second paragraph of *Dog World*'s scoop explains: 'Judge Argyle is a Kennel Club member, and his wife Mrs Ann Argyle is a committee member. She breeds the Harque Whippets and judged at the Border Counties Hound Club last Sunday.' Thanks to reader A. Dunn for this fascinating insight into the judicial psyche. And another fact you ought to know: in 1976 he was sued by the Dorchester Hotel for £3,410, a bill run up over 7 months and by then 9 months overdue. Then he paid up. Being a law-abiding sort of judge.

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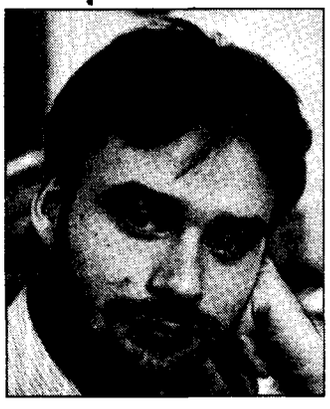

'What if you have a copper's feeling?'

Ten days ago I found myself sitting in Tottenham Court Road nick, on the wrong side of the desk for the first time in my life. I'd been asking for it. Two months previously, in the course of routine enquiries for the *NS* I'd phoned Scotland Yard's press office to ask about the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. How long, I'd enquired, does it take to train police officers in the new law? For junior officers, they said, one day. I asked if a lefty journalist could come and sit in on one of the courses.

They took their time, but to my utter astonishment, they agreed. A Mr Goodwin from the press office came along to chaperone me — 'It'll be useful for me too!' — and to whisper helpful translations of police jargon in my ear. And to 'massage' proceedings so I wouldn't hear what I shouldn't? Probably not.

Many of the 30 or so police persons on the course — mostly male — apparently thought the new law encroached on their ancient Spanish customs. 'You mean you've got to be able to *justify* searching someone you stop in the streets? What if you've just got a copper's feeling?' asked a young CID man in a two tone bomber jacket.

The trainer was amazed: 'How many of you search everyone you stop?' she asked. (Yes, she.) Most of the class raised a hand. 'It's called self-preservation,' called out one. 'If you don't then the next thing you know you've got a knife in the back,' said the first: 'Why should I have to think up excuses if someone makes a complaint? I don't want to have to lie to do my job properly. This job just doesn't give you any support, that's the problem.' 'Yeah, these laws are just invented to protect the criminal,' said his friend. Goodwin leaned over and said to me he thinks the new laws will mean *more* black kids being stopped and searched.

There were calls from the ranks for wooden hand clamps in police stations so that fingerprints can be taken forcibly — as the new law allows. The news that under the Act 10-14 year olds can now be fingerprinted was warmly received.

We watched a ludicrous training video in which Yorkshire policemen played Mafia villains. The script-writer seemed to have an obsession with intimate body searches. 'I've got places to hide things you'd never dream of,' lisped a Meryl Streep lookalike. 'Oh, but I do, I dream of them all the time,' replied the 'godfather'. 'What if they want to take samples from our little places?' the same poor woman was made to ask later on.

I'm sure I shouldn't admit it, but I enjoyed my day and good on them for letting me in. But it was evident that despite extensions of police power in the Act obvious to everyone *else*, many police clearly feel they're being let down. It seemed clear, too, that come 1 January 1986, when the Act comes into force, most police officers in London are going to have only the haziest idea of their powers. The Act, including the code of conduct (277 pages in all) is probably the most far reaching pieces of police legislation ever introduced. It just can't be taught in six hours excluding coffee breaks. Even the trainers admitted that they really need twice as long to do the job properly.

'Of course,' I said to a CID man in the canteen, Goodwin being elsewhere, 'It's going to be a question of going away and actually reading and learning the Act.'

'*I'll* do that,' he said gloomily. 'But will the young uniformed lads — that's the question.'

But if you weren't too sure of your powers one trainer had the solution: 'Ask yourself if what you're doing is necessary and reasonable. Would you like someone doing the same thing to you or your wife? That way you won't go far wrong.' A fine moral maxim — Christ himself said something similar — but no substitute for actually knowing the law.

The real fun will come in the courts next year, when counsel for the defence stands up and says: 'Tell me, P.C. Jones, under what authority did you arrest the defendant?'

Jolyon Jenkins

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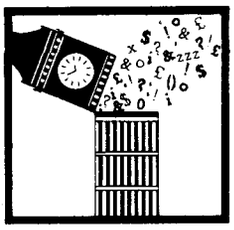

Be wary of the Left's secret Thatcherites

PETER KELLNER

LAST SUNDAY's episode of *The Writing on the Wall* on Channel Four graphically portrayed the destruction of the last Labour government's economic ambitions at the hands of — well, at the hands of whom? Public spending had already been cut well before the IMF appeared on the scene. Large-scale nationalisation had been struck off the party's agenda by Harold Wilson. Planning agreements and other features of Tony Benn's brave new socialist world were conceived in haste by unworldly party activists and killed at birth by a combination of Wilsonian scepticism and Whitehall sabotage.

It is a sorry record, and the programme spared nobody, from Robert Maxwell's ridiculous pretensions at the *Scottish Daily News* co-operative to Jack Jones's equally ridiculous assertion (if you believe Denis Healey's testimony, that is) that the Meriden co-operative making motor cycles did not need any research or development to make products that would sell. Most startling of all was the admission — or was it a boast? — by Sir Campbell Adamson, then director general of the Confederation of British Industry, that CBI members considered breaking the law in order to thwart Labour's policies.

So who did destroy the ambitions of the last Labour government? Cock-ups and conspiracies abounded, but fundamentally the government destroyed itself. Politically the party leadership abandoned its commitment to full employment and intellectually it discarded Keynes. The climax of this process came with James Callaghan's celebrated statement to Labour's 1976 annual conference:

> We used to think that you could spend your way out of a recession, and increase employment by cutting taxes and boosting government spending. I tell you in all candour that that option no longer exists.

Yes, I am aware this is not the first time that this column has quoted those words. It probably isn't the last, either. For Callaghan's speech not only summed up Labour's retreat from full employment policies over the previous two years; it inaugurated a new political era. Callaghan's argument — that reflation merely led to 'higher inflation followed by higher unemployment' — became the core of Mrs Thatcher's economic philosophy.

The result was deflation, high interest rates and falling inflation. But, far from spurring the economy to dizzy heights of prosperity, the real world behaved just as the Keynesians predicted: it slumped. Gradually, as the next election approaches, the Tories have learned their lesson. Quietly, and pretending not to, they are beginning to reflate.

But just as the Right is beginning to rediscover Keynes, the Left acts as it it is preparing for a final ecumenical burial service. If there is one thing that unites the soft and hard Left these days, it is the proposition that reflation won't work without the other, more radical, policies being simultaneously applied.

Thus one conclusion from a group led by John Prescott, Labour's shadow employment secretary, in *Planning for Full Employment*:

> Reflation alone — manipulating interest rates, exchange rates and government borrowing — will not be enough . . . We need a programme to plan key industries, sector by sector, and sometimes firm by firm.

Thus also Robin Murray, who has put together the GLC's sectoral plans for London's economy, in November's *Marxism Today*:

> The most significant weakness of Keynesianism is that it has no direct purchase on the major economic issue of our time, which is the restructuring of production . . . The development of national company and sectoral plans is I think the most urgent task for the next two years.

I HAVE THREE problems with statements like those. The first is that they surrender too much territory to Thatcherism. In terms of the planning-versus-markets debate, of course, neither Prescott nor Murray could be further removed from the Prime Minister. But they share her obsession with Britain's supply-side problems.

Only an idiot would deny that such problems exist or that socialism needs to provide distinctive solutions to those problems; but the doubling of unemployment between 1979 and 1981 was *not* the result of supply side failure. It was because the government kept interest rates and the exchange rate too high and borrowing too low.

My second problem with the Prescott/Murray thesis is that if it were true it would require a planning exercise of quite horrendous proportions. Let us keep our ambitions modest and assume that Labour enters the next elections with plans for only a handful of key enterprises — say, BP, BT, ICI, GEC and Barclays Bank — on the principle that once you have control of the commanding heights, smaller enterprises will adjust themselves to Labour's scheme of things. Let us also assume that feasible plans require a staff of only 20 experts (technicians, accountants, computer operators, market analysts and so on) per company, with relevant back-up resources (office space, secretaries, computers, telephone lines etc).

Most people who know anything about ICI or Barclays would regard such teams as ludicrously small. Even so, the annual bill for such an exercise covering just those six companies would leave little change from £4 million. I would be surprised if Walworth Road is spending even one hundredth of that on the details of Labour's industrial policy.

Indeed, Geoff Bish, Labour's director of research, has set his face explicitly against detailed policy making, as last Sunday's leak to the *Observer* of his latest strategy paper makes clear. But if Labour does not carry out detailed planning before the next election then simple logic suggests that the party will have to wait until after it, when it will have — and I am trying to type this with a straight face — the experience and resources of the civil service to draw upon.

Which brings us to the third problem with the great Prescott/Murray recovery dream. If the resources to undertake detailed company planning are not to be made available until after the next election, then it will be, say, two years before properly worked-out sector-by-sector programmes can be implemented — and at least another two years before their impact is fully felt in terms of new products, new jobs and new working relationships. Again, I am erring on the side of optimism in assuming that such plans can bear fruit in four years; don't look now, but some otherwise sound comrades doubt whether detailed sectoral and company planning from outside can work at all.

But let us refuse to be deflected by such doubters and instead stick resolutely to our four-year timetable for socialist recovery. What does Labour offer the jobless in the meantime? It can do various direct things to train more school-leavers, encourage early retirement and provide inducements for work-sharing. But otherwise the kind of economic policies that will be needed will involve higher public spending, especially on construction, a more sensible approach to government borrowing, a monetary policy that keeps interest rates as low as possible and a competitive exchange rate.

In other words, Labour will need a mix of policies that Keynes would not merely have approved of, but possibly designed had he still been around. Such policies are currently associated with the Employment Institute, which some on the Left regard as an Alliance ramp. Such views could become self-fulfilling. If Labour turns its back on the kinds of ideas being floated by the Institute, it will have difficulty persuading voters that it can do anything much to cut unemployment this side of the socialist millennium.

Callaghan was wrong in 1976. Despite the unlikely allies he has acquired since, the views he expressed then remain wrong today. □

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THE POLITICIANS WHO CRIED WOLF

TOO FEW BOMBS TO GO ROUND

Behind the official bluff, there are fewer nukes than everyone thinks. Using secret official documents, DUNCAN CAMPBELL reports on how many Bombs there *really* are. *Research by Patrick Forbes.*

HELENSBURGH, STRATHCLYDE, 20 June 1985, 1415 hours. For the first time a secret military convoy carrying nuclear weapons was involved in a public accident (see opposite).

As the convoy drove through the streets of the Scottish town, two heavily armoured nuclear weapons carriers collided. Smoke poured from the rear of one of the damaged load carriers. A military fire tender, tailing the convoy, pulled alongside, and fire hoses were unwound...

The previous night, the twelve vehicles in the RAF's Special Convoy had been stationed in the Coulport Royal Naval Armament Depot. There they had been loaded with nuclear warheads from Polaris missiles, ready for the return leg of their monthly trip to Scotland.

The Helensburgh incident did not cause anything worse than a traffic jam, this time ...

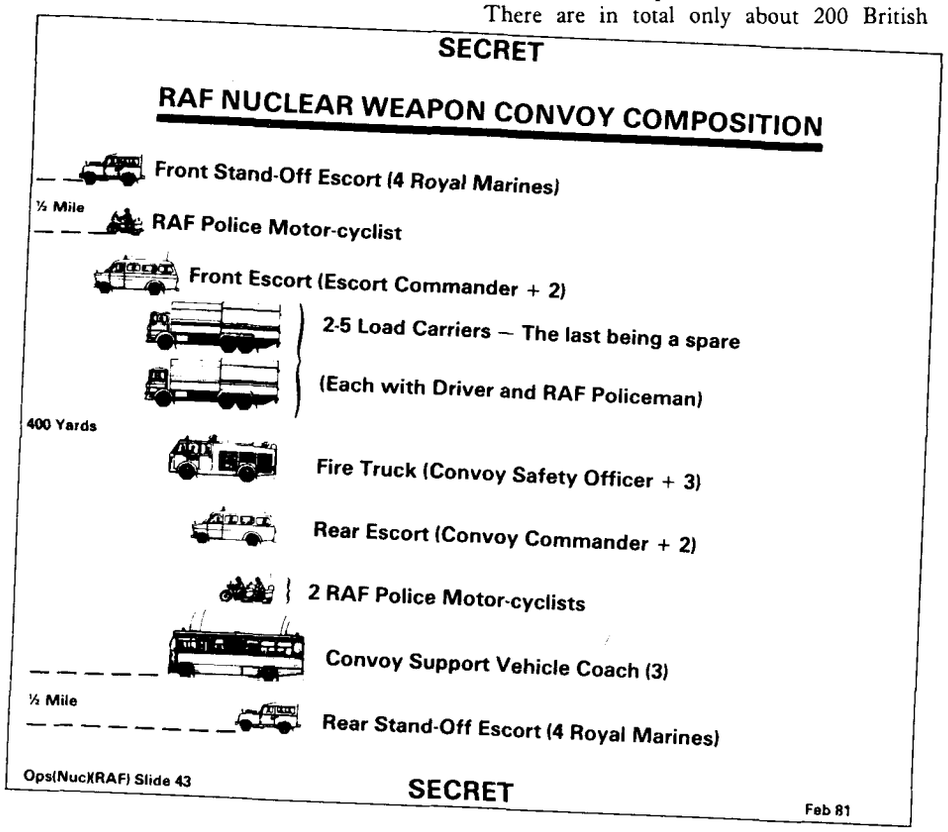
An official Ministry of Defence enquiry has been held into the accident. Its findings are not public, and are not intended to become so.

THE CONVOY THAT CRASHED in Helensburgh was part of the routine business of maintaining Britain's nuclear weapons stockpile. But the real size of the British nuclear stockpile is, in fact, far less than the normal public estimates of about 500 to 1,000 weapons.

It has usually been assumed that the advent of Trident missiles to replace the present Polaris will mean an enormous increase in the size of the British stockpile. Each of the four planned Trident submarines will carry sixteen missiles, the same as Polaris. But each Trident missile can carry fourteen warheads instead of, at present, the Polaris maximum of three.

To equip Trident fully would require, in theory, 704 new warheads. Trident's capacity has been taken to imply that, during the 1990s, Britain will acquire a total of between 1,000 and 1,500 nuclear warheads.

In fact, the present British stockpile is insufficient to fill even one Trident D5 submarine's complement of 224 warheads. There are in total only about 200 British nuclear weapons — perhaps even less.


SECRET
RAF NUCLEAR WEAPON CONVOY COMPOSITION
Front Stand-Off Escort (4 Royal Marines)
½ Mile
RAF Police Motor-cyclist
Front Escort (Escort Commander + 2)
2-5 Load Carriers — The last being a spare
(Each with Driver and RAF Policeman)
400 Yards
Fire Truck (Convoy Safety Officer + 3)
Rear Escort (Convoy Commander + 2)
2 RAF Police Motor-cyclists
Convoy Support Vehicle Coach (3)
½ Mile
Rear Stand-Off Escort (4 Royal Marines)
Ops(Nuc)(RAF) Slide 43
SECRET
Feb 81

Slide from official RAF briefing on nuclear weapons convoys in Britain (redrawn and reset from poor quality original copy). Film of convoy on the move will be shown by Yorkshire TV next Tuesday.

In an unpublicised and unilateral act of nuclear disarmament, Britain has also dismantled all the H-bombs (thermonuclear weapons) which equipped the RAF V-bomber force during the 1960s and 1970s. By the early 1980s, according to official sources, the RAF had stocks of only one kind of 'tactical' nuclear weapon, the WE177. Although some of the RAF's former H-bombs may have been fitted for a time to some Polaris missiles, these too will have been removed by now to make way for (and provide the nuclear material for) the smaller, multiple warhead Chevaline system.

Despite widespread suspicions about the amount of military plutonium the government has manufactured, aired by CND and other groups at the Sizewell Inquiry, it now appears that such suspicions (which the *NS* has also publicised) may have been thought officially useful in that they diverted attention away from the (comparatively) *small* size of Britain's nuclear stockpile, thus helping to conceal the severe physical constraints on British nuclear weapons production. The government is known to have systematically encouraged such exaggerated publicity about nuclear weapons stocks throughout the 1950s and 1960s.

The constraints on British nuclear weapons — in particular, the extremely limited amount of weapons grade plutonium available — mean that even with British Nuclear Fuel's 'military' nuclear reactors now working at maximum capacity, sufficient warheads for the new Trident submarines can only be produced by removing the plutonium from an equivalent number of existing nuclear weapons.

According to a defence specialist who has worked inside the nuclear programme during the 1980s, the British stockpile now consists of approximately:

80 RAF tactical 'lay-down' bombs, type WE177, believed to have a variable nuclear yield between about 5 kilotons and about 200 kilotons (about 15 times the power of the Hiroshima bomb);

25 RN nuclear depth bombs, a low yield variation of the RAF tactical bomb, for use against submarines;

40 Polaris-Chevaline **missile warheads, type A3TK, believed now to carry three seperately targetted nuclear weapons.**

This makes a stockpile total of, at most, about 225 nuclear weapons; or, if Chevaline missiles only contain two warheads, about 185.

Even excluding the warheads on US Navy Poseidon submarines, based in the Holy Loch in Scotland, this means that the United States has more nuclear weapons in Britain than Britain does. Additionally, the US provides nuclear weapons for use by the British Army and RAF in Germany, and nuclear depth charges for RAF Nimrod anti-submarine aircraft stationed in Britain.

Mrs Thatcher and senior members of the cabinet therefore know that much of Trident's potential nuclear capacity is pointless for lack of warheads. According to a senior defence source:

> It was quite clear when the decision to order Trident was taken, there would not be enough nuclear material to fill up all the operational spaces on the missiles — there never would be...

The warhead shortage is also exacerbated by the increasing age of the British tactical bomb, ▷

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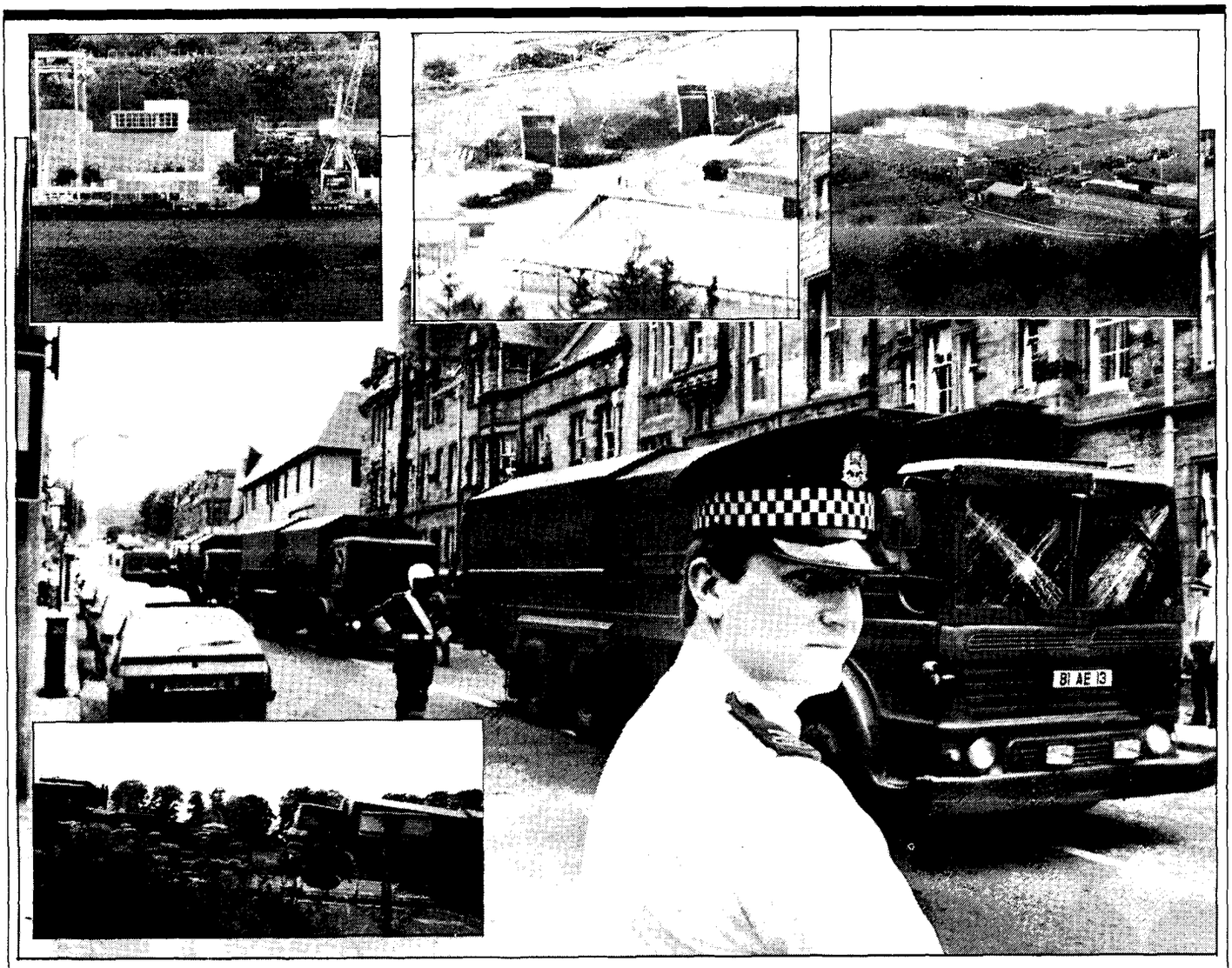

THE PHOTOGRAPHS show the sequence of events after a Polaris submarine arrives at the Royal Naval Armament Depot, at Coulport, west of Glasgow. The Polaris missiles are unloaded (above left); a Polaris missile may be seen on the extreme left of the picture). The missiles are then transported to the missile and warhead storage depot (above centre). Warheads for refurbishment or replacement are removed, and loaded into the carriers of the RAF Special Convoy (above right the convoy is seen mustering). After the Helensburgh accident (main photo), the damage (and by then unloaded) nuclear weapons carrier was spotted a few days later under tow near Oxford, limping back to base (below left).

Official instructions on the 'Security of RAF Special Convoys' are contained in orders issued to chief constables. The copy we have obtained was issued to Avon and Somerset Constabulary, as 'Force Permanent Operational Order Number 3.' The Force will not comment on the contents of the Order, but say that changes have been made recently.

The instructions, classified as 'Secret', say that the movement of 'special weapons by road convoy ... is carried out by RAF teams specially trained for the purpose [including] armed Service personnel.' The convoys are 'completely self-sufficient regarding the security and safety of the load being escorted', and are accompanied by a 'convoy support vehicle' which carries arms and ammunition, rations, communications sets, radiation measuring and decontamination equipment, and spare motorcycles for the accompanying police escorts. The official RAF slide (facing page) shows the composition of the convoy.

Although the convoy is under RAF control, armed security guards are provided by the Royal Marines Commachio Company, a special security force formed in 1980. Commachio company marine guards are stationed at the Clyde submarine bases, Faslane and Coulport, and at depots holding nuclear naval weapons — believed to be Dean Hill, near Salisbury, and Ernesettle, near Plymouth. Just two naval ports — Portsmouth and Devonport — are 'certified' safe for nuclear weapons.

The convoy is fitted with advanced communications equipment, with which it can contact any force in whose area it is travelling. The convoy commanders and support vehicles are fitted with long range high frequency radios with which 'the convoy is in constant communication with its MoD Control, which continuously monitors its progress'.

The convoy can use four special codewords to identify itself: CUBAN, ODDLY, SOLID, or HURRY. In the event of an accident, the nuclear convoy must broadcast the secret codeword 'OLDHAM', followed by a number. OLDHAM ONE means that the convoy is halted after an accident, but radioactive material has not been spilled. OLDHAM TWO is worse; safety may be at risk. OLDHAM THREE is the signal to police that bombs have been damaged — or worse — and radioactive material spilled.

If the convoy comes under armed attack, then the message to be relayed to the police is 'BILBO':

> This is ODDLY — under attack by armed party at grid reference ... BILBO, BILBO, BILBO! ...

The *New Statesman* first published a photograph of the RAF Special Convoy in 1982, followed by an artist's impression of the overall convoy a year later (*NS* 10 June 1983. Since then, Cruisewatch and Polariswatch groups and others have logged over 80 sightings.

The convoys are controlled by the RAF Special Safety Organisation, based at RAF Locking near Weston Super Mare. Wherever the convoy goes, the Special Safety Organisation provides a radiological safety team on standby, known as a Base Support Team (BST).

The BST includes 14 specially trained RAF personnel and a 'Medical Centre' team. In the event of an accident, their tasks include providing a 'cordon at 300 metre radius minimum [ensuring] that cordon contains the radioactive hazard'. They must then 'provide initial control of entry to and exit from the Hazardous Zone, including protection and monitoring of personnel', and 'prepare the Medical Centre for receipt of casualties'.

If a severe accident damages a nuclear weapon, the greatest hazard would result from an explosion accompanied or followed by a fire. Both Britain and the United States have extensively studied the possible results of such accidents to nuclear weapons during storage or transport.

These studies have not been published; however, a 1979 study by the US Congress General Accounting Office has been published, which predicted that, under typical atmospheric conditions, a severe nuclear weapons accident might generate a radioactive plume extending for 28 miles and spreading across 2.5 miles.

The published US assessment corresponds closely with similar calculations made by British scientists from Aldermaston, who carried out a series of tests called Vixen B on the Maralinga range in Australia during the early 1960s. The objective was to discover what would happen to a nuclear weapon damaged in transit. According to one of the reports prepared before the current Australian Royal Commission inquiry, the likely dispersal of plutonium in these tests required 'a radiological safety radius of 35 miles'. ●

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the WE177. Even when the new plutonium manufacturing facilities at Aldermaston, the 'A90' complex, become available during the next three years, two of the four processing 'bays' will not be available for Trident warhead manufacturing. According to secret bulding specifications for the new complex, one bay will be needed to recover plutonium from existing British nuclear weapons and a second will be needed for research and development work on the replacement for WE177 and the navy nuclear depth charges.

By the time Trident warhead manufacture finishes, after 8-10 years of production, many of the WE177 bombs will have exceded their design lifetime of about 25 years and will urgently need replacement (if the government of the day chooses to keep nuclear weapons).

Five years ago, the Ministry of Defence's Assistant Chief Scientific Adviser (Nuclear), Dennis Fakley, told the House of Commons Defence Committee that:

> The Trident missile is capable of carrying eight warheads. *There is no guarantee* that you neccessarily will carry eight warheads on that Trident missile (our emphasis).

In fact, according to official sources, there remains 'no way that the UK can produce enough plutonium for Trident warheads; half the warhead slots will be empty'. Yet, in 1982, the government decided to order Trident D5 missiles, instead of the earlier C4 variety. Each D5 missile will have six extra empty spaces.

THE OLD 'TACTICAL' bomb, the WE177, was first delivered to the RAF in September 1966. Some V-bombers were equipped with this weapon rather than the British built 'Yellow Sun' hydrogen bombs. The Yellow Suns have all now been taken apart, while WE177s are described as growing a 'bit long in the tooth'. Stocks of the WE177 bomb are held at a few RAF bases where nuclear capable aircraft are based, including Honington in Suffolk, Lossiemouth in Scotland, Coltishall near Norwich and St Mawgan in Cornwall, as well as Laarbruch in Germany.

The RAF Special Weapons Convoy has been regularly observed in transit to and from Honington and, less frequently, St Mawgan. Its most frequent trips take it from the Burghfield factory to Scotland; then via temporary stops at RAF bases in Carlisle, Leeming or Wittering, to Honington. It then returns to Burghfield via Cambridge and Oxford, or via Slough and Watford, or it goes on to the underground Royal Naval Armament Depot at Dean Hill, east of Salisbury.

The Navy has its own, relatively small stock of nuclear depth bombs. For some time after the Falklands War, they were not allowed to take them to sea. Ministers had belatedly discovered that the admirals had sent three quarters of the total British naval nuclear stockpile towards the South Atlantic battle zone.

In peacetime, nuclear depth bombs are only allowed on board attack carriers (like HMS *Hermes* and HMS *Invincible*) and certain anti-submarine frigates. As all of the available ships in these classes set off for the Falklands in 1982, the 'War Cabinet' — the Oversea and Defence committee (South Atlantic) — were warned that most of the Navy's nuclear weapons would soon cross the equator.

The RAF's nuclear capacity, in contrast to the Navy, had always been subject to firm political control. It is not normally allowed off the ground with nuclear weapons in an armed or armable condition. The OD(SA) committee ordered that all nuclear weapons be taken off the task force after it reached Ascension Island. A Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessel collected them.

There were thus no tactical nuclear weapons on board the surface ships sent south to the Falklands. The deep-diving vessel sent to recover 'equipment' from the sunken wreck of HMS *Coventry* — widely suspected at the time to have been an attempt to recover lost nuclear weapons — was in fact attempting to retrieve top secret cryptographic equipment and codebooks which the destroyer's captain had not had time to destroy. Type 42 destroyers, like *Coventry*, do not carry nuclear weapons in peacetime.

After 1982, all the RN nuclear depth bombs were taken back to, and kept in, British depots. But the advent of nuclear capable Sea Harrier aircraft has given the Navy the chance to lobby for new nuclear roles.

THE ONLY authoritative statement about the Chevaline improvement programme for Polaris missiles is the opaque official assertion that the installation of Chevaline 'does not involve any increase in the number of warheads associated with the Polaris force'. Chevaline is said not to be a MIRV (Multiple Independent Re-entry Vehicle) system, where different warheads can be aimed at different targets.

This statement, if not wholly untrue, is certainly misleading. The Chevaline system does permit separate targets to be identified and attacked — but the spread, or 'footprint', of the warheads cover a smaller area than is customary for US or Soviet MIRVed missiles.

Despite this, the Chevaline programme has ironically *reduced* the number of targets which can be attacked, because of the requirement that there must be a British capacity to destroy Moscow — known as the 'Moscow criterion'. The *raison d'etre* of the British nuclear deterrent has always been that, despite the normal commitment of British Polaris missiles and bombers to Nato, they can be used independently 'where Her Majesty's Government may decide that supreme national interests are at stake'.

During the debate about Chevaline in the early 1970s, there was extensive argument about the Moscow criterion. The question arose whether it sufficed for national deterrent purposes to have the capacity to attack a range of major and minor Soviet cities — or whether it was essential to be able to destroy Moscow, despite its growing ring of anti-missile defences.

The official justification for proceeding with Chevaline was that the ability to attack Moscow had to be retained. The new warheads therefore employ 'penetration aids' to confuse tracking radars and other Soviet defence systems. The Chiefs of Staff, and some nuclear planners, had reservations about this objective. But if Chevaline had not gone ahead in the early 1970s, the Aldermaston nuclear weapons design staff would have had nothing to do.

Eventually, the nuclear target planners were hoist with their own petard. Since the ostensible purpose of Chevaline was to retain the ability to attack Moscow, more of the missiles had to be targetted there, in order to assure Moscow's destruction.

A great deal of Chevaline testing still remains to be done. According to US documents on strategic missile testing, 'A3TK' (Chevaline) firing tests are to be conducted continuously at the US Air Force Eastern Test Range, off Florida, every year from now until 1988.

But the Chevaline stockpile is also much smaller than is normally assumed. There is not one missile for every one of the 64 launch tubes on British Polaris submarines, since, at any given time, one Polaris submarine is always in 'long refit' at Rosyth naval dockyard. A second submarine is usually in 'short refit' and not available for service in less than four to six weeks. Only one submarine is on patrol at any time, while a second submarine must be available to take over before it has returned to port. In consequence, sufficient missiles and warheads are only needed to equip two submarines, plus spares. About forty full Chevaline warheads therefore suffice. It is the fitting and refitting of these warheads that has resulted in the increased Special Convoy traffic between Burghfield and Scotland.

THE CURRENT 'SHORTAGE' of nuclear warheads, compared to delivery systems, is nothing new. A similar situation occurred in the early 1960s, when the RAF obtained large numbers of V-bombers, but had only a handful of bombs. By 1960, the RAF had 14 V bombers squadrons — but sufficient bombs for less than a quarter of the aircraft available.

The result was a desperate scramble to find alternative uses for at least six squadrons of V-bombers. Many aircraft were abandoned as bombers and refitted instead for refuelling, reconnaissance or electronic jamming operations. Three squadrons were allocated completely to NATO, not national requirements, and thus gained access to US nuclear weapons instead.

The shortage became more acute once the Polaris submarines were operating, as the RAF had to hand over its bombs to be put instead on top of Polaris missiles. As the Polaris submarines came into service, RAF bombers and Blue Steel missiles were withdrawn and scrapped. The Navy's takeover and eventual dismantlement of all the RAF's thermonuclear weapons may help to explain why some former Bomber Command officers have fulminated about Polaris, frequently coupling the Royal Navy with CND and the Communist Party as equal threats to national security.

Former Bomber Command chief, Air Vice-Marshal Stewart Menaul has called Polaris 'not credible' and the 'greatest blunder in recent military history'. Underlying this statement may be an awareness on the part of the military that British unwillingness to enter our nuclear weapons in arms negotiations with the Russians may be less because the government is afraid to trade and more because there is little *to* trade. □

NEXT WEEK: The peace time health hazards of nuclear weapons.

The Yorkshire TV documentary, Inside Britain's Bomb, *based in part on these disclosures, will be shown on Tuesday 3 December at 10.40 p.m..*

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New Statesman

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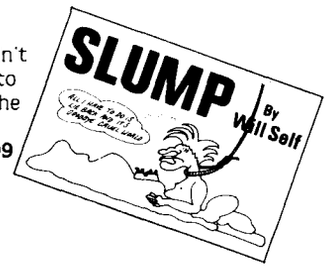

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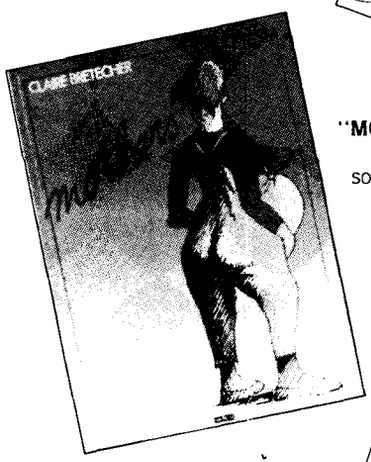

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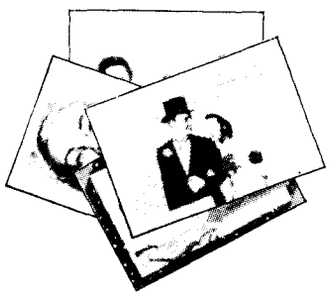

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LOVE ONE ANOTHER OR . . .

DESIRE & MR HAYHOE

This government's, and indeed the nation's, prudery about sex is about to be put to an unprecedented test, says ANDREW LUMSDEN, as the DHSS plans a public information campaign to contain the risk of Aids

Cartoon from a user-friendly Scpttish Aids Monitor leaflet

ON BBC2 on the night of 8 November neither Ludovic Kennedy, presenter of the *Did You See?* show, nor his guests Janet Street-Porter and Waldemar Januszczak, art critic of the *Guardian*, protested when fellow guest John Ardagh, Penguin author, casually referred to 'the two queers' in the soap opera *Dynasty*.

If celebrity broadcasters in a 'quality' vehicle who are themselves of liberal, arts and professional writing backgrounds are too supine to kick up a storm when a vulgarian uses an epithet directly equivalent to 'yid' or 'nigger', how and by whom is the grosser homophobia of the Right to be countered?

The question, perennial to those with any genuine wish for a civilised society, has taken on an unprecedented community health urgency with the news that early next year there will be a public health campaign using the media to advocate 'safer sex' practices to restrain transmission of the Aids virus HTLV-3.

The principal initial target audience for any such government-sponsored campaign in 1986 will have to be overt or covert, frequent or occasional, practitioners of male homosexuality, by no means all of whom call themselves gay, or even bisexual, in their own minds or to anyone else. For the incidence of diagnosed cases of Aids in the UK is still falling primarily on gay/bisexual men — over 90 per cent of the 241 recorded cases at 31 October. (In the USA, some 70 per cent of 14,125 cases are attributed to gay/bisexual men.)

Equally to the point for a preventative campaign, early 1985 tests on gay/bisexual men in the London clinics indicated that about a third already showed antibodies to the Aids virus. That is, they had been exposed to it and the body had fought back. Some 10 per cent of those with the antibodies may, on present guesstimates, ultimately contract the full condition of Aids; some 15 per cent may exhibit lesser illnesses.

In the meantime the *body positive* (those testing positive for HTLV-3 antibodies) are so far as is known infectious to others in certain narrowly defined circumstances, primarily sexual.

The activity of gay male sexuality therefore goes on the public agenda as never before, even in legislative debates. And must soon go on the agenda, with whatever degree of frankness, in press and broadcasting 'spots' paid for by government.

THIS WILL BE a greater test of the hereditary prudery of publicly-controlled institutions, as of the privately-controlled sectors of the media, than we have yet seen in any area of sexuality. There should be proper public attention to women's risk of cervical cancer; to men's responsibility in contraception; to sexual transmission of diseases in general. But ours is a government of retributive rather than prophylactic temperament.

Aids is to be an exception. We all know why. It is not because gay men are '*worth it*' — I take the phrase from 'safer sex' leafletting already put out by gays themselves: safer sex is '*not easy, but you're worth it*' — any more than women are '*worth it*', but because there is apprehension of a 'leakage' of the HTLV-3 virus 'from' gays/bisexuals and IV drug users into the exclusively heterosexual population. I draw the infamous 'leakage' word from two editions of *Weekend World* (ITV).

The retributive come-on, reinforced every time an Ardagh speaks of 'queers' and a Januszczak fails to blow up about it, is being felt by governments around the Western World. Extreme right-wing Queensland, in Australia, seeks compulsory declarations of homosexuality; the candidate mayor of Dallas is inadvertently broadcast suggesting 'shoot the queers'. That muscle in all governments which twitches to dump on *someone* in a crisis can see votes in dumping right now on the gays.

But balanced against that is a reluctant gathering perception that the unforseeable — and most certainly unintentional — emergence of First World gay men as the inaugural prime risk-group from HTLV-3 may paradoxically necessitate a truly honest public acquiescence in the realities of gay male sexuality for the first time in modern culture.

Thus in Hong Kong, where in bigoted and chauvinist colony-law male homosexuality was and still is wholly criminalised by the British, an Aids 'hotline' guaranteeing confidentiality opened this week (25 November). If gays are not to be treated as people, 'real' people stand to suffer, and to take it out on their governments.

Therefore, though torn between the politics of its masters and its responsibilities in the public health arena, the Department of Health & Social Security here in the UK has set aside £100,000 for the Floral St advertising agency TBWA to make proposals for a public Aids educational campaign next year. No promotional budget figure is being released by the DHSS, but in fact some £2½ million over financial 1986-87 is being talked of. 'Whether it will be posters, leaflets, radio, TV, press is so far unknown,' says the DHSS. But, again, radio is virtually certain to be included, and TV is being actively considered.

Draft planning is for a campaign 'learning from the American experience' (DHSS), with a 'main thrust' to gay men, bearing in mind the numbers who don't participate in social gay life or identify as gay, and also a subsidiary 'thrust' towards the 'ordinary man and woman in the street'. It is possible that the first results will be visible (or audible) next February.

The ultimate word on what the campaign shows or says will rest with the minister himself, the DHSS confirms. That, since the 'presentational' reshuffle of the Cabinet this autumn, is Barney Hayhoe, 60 years old and starting from a position of maximum apparent political disqualification for the task.

Hayhoe has a peculiarly unfortunate track record. He was civil service minister, and answerable in Parliament, during the recent Customs seizures of lesbian and gay writing. Ludicrously, the health ministry he now heads had to request Customs and police officers this summer (before he took over, and at the request of gays) to be wary of impounding 'sexually explicit' Aids publications.

But really he is nothing other, all prior conduct set aside, than the nation's First Learner, prospectively on behalf of the entire public, about the difference which may be made to the containment of the spreading HTLV-3 virus if males contemplating homosexual acts, as we *will* do, are helped and not hindered in obtaining information about the safer modes.

The 'Mr Grundy' problem for Hayhoe (or it may ultimately be his Cabinet chief Norman Fowler) is that no phrophylactic government campaign against Aids will work with gay men

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if the government's publicity is unfriendly: if the 1986 campaign does not over-turn all tradition, and like gay men.

Oddly, the preliminary task for those of us who are ourselves gay men has been to respond to the arrival of the Aids virus by liking *one-another* rather more, in advance of any improvement in the manners of government. We have shared, far more than has been faced before, the general prudery of the nation. '*Talk dirty*', a wise article in the current *Gay Times* advocates: ie, don't be inhibited about talking of the varieties of sexual behaviour that vastly reduce, to the best of present clinical knowledge, the chance of transmitting or exacerbating the Aids virus.

On the broader stage, out of the bedroom, gays have already through Scottish Aids Monitor, Terrence Higgins Trust (THT) and other voluntary groups distributed some 200,000 leaflets exactly defining what Aids is (or appears to be) and confronting, with a previously unknown quiet and friendly precision, just what we can physically do with one-another; and would be better advised not to do.

Last weekend (23-24 November) the THT organised a second annual London conference on Aids, attended from round the country. No-one from the DHSS troubled to appear. But that era of nearly-total DHSS passivity now looks set to crack, as freezing prejudice encounters burning necessity. As Auden wrote, 'we must love one-another, or die'. □

REFORM

FROM THE CRADLE TO THE GRAVE

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR reviews a new book on the welfare state that argues for a radical approach

NORMAN FOWLER's review of the social security system is proving a real millstone for the government. The White Paper which will put the flesh on the bones of the review published in June has been delayed, probably until mid-December but possibly even until after Christmas.

This makes the timetable for legislation incredibly tight as the government is determined on getting the Royal Assent by July. There is talk of dissent within the ranks of the senior civil servants working on the review and a leaked report suggested that an extra 10,000 civil servants will be needed to administer the new system. The report also warned that the changes will take a year longer to implement than expected — just about the time when the next general election hustings will begin.

The proposals in the review have proved unpopular beyond the government's worst dreams. Of 7,000 responses to the consultation process, 90 per cent were critical and a survey by the Child Poverty Action Group of responses from 60 organisations, including the CBI and the Institute of Directors, showed almost unanimous opposition to all the main proposals. This presents the government with the unpalatable choice of either postponing the changes until after the election, leaving the spectre of the undecided proposals hanging over the two thirds of the population wholly or partly dependent on the welfare system, or implementing an unpopular policy now.

But hold the giggles. What is being offered by the Left to challenge the reviews and put forward alternatives? The fact that Fowler is able to begin the process of dismantling the whole system is precisely because of its unpopularity. Social security should be a natural province of the Left, a vote winner for Labour, and a fount of pride for all socialists. It isn't and a book* published last week suggests why: there is precious little socialist about it and the Left has ducked the issue of reform.

The authors, Peter Esam, Robert Good and Rick Middleton, re-examine the social security system from first principles. In doing so, they not only expose the dangers of Fowler's Folly, but offer a coherent alternative.

They cut across the main issue on which suggested improvements of the social security system seems to become stuck — whether to extend the insurance principle or improve means-testing — by ditching both. To do so, they have to move outside the immediate concerns of social security, proposing minimum wage law and a reform of the tax system to underpin their blueprint.

Their simplification of benefits would result in just two types of payment: 'positional' benefits paid to claimants who are not in full-time work — the sick, people with disabilities, carers, part-time workers — and cost-related benefits, payable to anyone who has, for example, high housing costs. There would be no contributory benefits, that is, the idea of national 'insurance' would be abolished. Benefits would be taxable but not means-tested. There would be no minimum 'social credit' or 'income guarantee' paid to all claimants, as the Liberal/SDP Alliance has suggested. Instead, it would be up to employers to pay a minimum wage and, for those out of work, a housing allowance in addition to the normal benefit would ensure a basic standard of living.

THE STRATEGY is worked out in the book in some detail, though as Rick Middleton told the *New Statesman*, 'we could do with a year's research and a computer to put figures on our suggestions', but there is obviously not space here to outline the whole scheme. Instead, it's worth looking at a few of the principles behind the ideas.

First, there ought to be explicitly socialist objectives in the system. Although means-testing is sometimes defended by the Left as a reasonable way of ensuring that benefits are well-targeted, in practice the autocratic operation of the test and the stigma felt by those who have to submit to it are unacceptable. Much better, then, to tax all income, including benefits, in a much more progressive system, ensuring that the rich will effectively pay back their benefits in tax. The idea of contributory benefits cannot be defended. They simply ensure that those fortunate to have work are entitled to a better class of benefit. Above all, the whole system ought to be geared to reducing inequalities of income, most notably between those in work and the unemployed, rather than as at present, deliberately reinforcing them to create the 'incentive to work'.

Secondly, employers should have a responsibility towards meeting their employees' needs, most notably through paying a minimum wage. Esam, Good and Middleton suggest that, where employers find this impossible, they should submit themselves to a 'social usefulness' test by the local authority who would then pay a wages subsidy to firms which pass it. The problem with the indiscriminate subsidy launched by Lord Young, the Employment Secretary, two weeks ago is that it simply encourages firms to pay low wages.

Thirdly, people should be treated as individuals and guaranteed a sufficient income to ensure their full participation in society. Separating out the members of a family would, at a stroke, free women from their second-class status.

At the last election, Labour's manifesto had little to say about social security except the Oliver Twist principle — more for the poor. That's not good enough, as the current attack on the system has demonstrated. Again, it's back to the old habit of defending the indefensible. Take SERPS, the new state pension scheme set up in 1975. Because it is a contributory

*Peter Esam, Robert Good and Rick Middleton, *Who's to benefit: a radical review of the social security system*, Verso, £4.95.

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compulsory scheme, and pay outs benefit on the basis of how much has been paid in, it ensures that the divisions between workers are carried into old age. That is not an argument in favour of abolishing SERPS — which is decidedly an improvement on the previous position — but it shows that in merely defending it, rather than setting out alternatives, Labour compounds its past inadequacies. Should retired labourers really get less than former bank managers? Britain's pensions are the lowest, in relation to average earnings, of any EEC country. Shouldn't Labour simply be arguing for a higher flat-rate pension for all?

In fact, the party is currently preparing a statement for its next conference on social security and Michael Meacher, its spokesperson, has set up a network of committees to look at various ways of improving the system. Their reports, already delayed, are expected in the near future, but a total overhaul of the whole structure is not even up for discussion. It should be. □

DISUNITED IRELAND

AN EYE ON THE HISTORY BOOKS

COLM TOIBIN looks at the opposition to the Anglo-Irish agreement in the Republic

IS CHARLES HAUGHEY'S bark worse than his bite? The question may be rather important as Haughey still seems likely to head an Irish government within the next 18 months. Since the signing of the Hillsborough Agreement two weeks ago Haughey has not just been barking; he has been whining, snarling and baying at the moon.

'By confirming what is called the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as an integral part of the United Kingdom,' he said last week, 'this agreement will do serious damage in the eyes of the world to Ireland's historic and legitimate claim to the unity of her territory.'

He led his Fianna Fail party, who were 19 points ahead in the opinion polls, into the opposition lobbies to vote against the deal, only one of them falling by the wayside to vote for the government. She is Mary Harney, who is certain to be expelled from the Fianna Fail parliamentary party for her vote and possibly will be expelled from the party itself.

The fact that they clashed openly with moderate nationalists in the North upset many party members and party supporters; the fact, in particular, that Seamus Mallon, known as the most hardline nationalist in the SDLP, supported the deal and Haughey did not, left many, including supporters of Mr Haughey, questioning his political judgment.

By the middle of last week Fianna Fail realised it had made a mistake. At a meeting of the parliamentary party on Wednesday Ray MacSharry, a former deputy prime minister and also known as a hardline nationalist from a border constituency, advised the party to abstain in the vote on the deal.

That evening Haughey received a cool reception when he addressed a large gathering of party activists in a Dublin hotel. His speech, widely reported, softened the party's approach to the deal.

'If those who are committed to it', he said, 'can use it to ameliorate the condition of the nationalist community in Northern Ireland, we could not and we would not wish to put any difficulties in their way.'

On Saturday last the *Irish Times* published a poll which showed that the deal was approved by 59 per cent of the population of the Republic and opposed by 29 per cent. A poll published on Monday showed that Mr Haughey, who was 6 points ahead in popularity, is now 8 points behind Dr FitzGerald — although his party, Fianna Fail, shows only a small fall in its massive lead.

The question remains of what the party will do about the Hillsborough Agreement if or when it comes back to power.

WHEN HAUGHEY became Taoiseach (prime minister) in 1979 it was with the firm intention of changing radically the current political wisdom on Northern Ireland. Garret FitzGerald, then leader of the opposition, believed that progress in Northern Ireland must wait for reconciliation between the two communities. Haughey was of the view that the way forward lay not in having fruitless discussions with the Unionists, but rather in talks between the two sovereign governments, between Dublin and London.

When he visited Mrs Thatcher in May 1980 he brought her a Georgian teapot. He told her that politicians did not go down in history for reducing the inflation rate by a few points but for solving the larger problems such as Northern Ireland.

However, Haughey will not want to wreck the deal, simply because, if it works, FitzGerald not he will go down in history.

He will call for a constitutional conference to work out the detailed structures for a British withdrawal and a united Ireland. If he does, Britain is likely to turn down his request; thereafter he has two options.

The Republic is now spending vast sums of money on border security. At Fianna Fail's last annual conference there were moves from the republican-minded members of the party to have this reduced. Haughey is in a position to threaten the British with this, but is unlikely to do so. Public opposition to his stand on this deal, even from within his party, has been so great that it may go on to damage him in the next election, particularly if there is a belief that he may soften the state's opposition to the IRA.

His second option would be to take part in the inter-governmental conference set up by the Anglo-Irish deal, which would meet in Belfast. A senior Fianna Fail member would not rule this out, although Haughey would certainly reduce the influence of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the conference. He has long distrusted the department and the feeling has been mutual. He is likely to remove some of the functions of the department relating to Anglo-Irish affairs to his own office and his personal control.

GARRET FITZGERALD has benefited greatly from the deal in the Republic. Up to now, his government has failed to deal with the economic problems of budget deficit and foreign debt which it promised to do before the election.

FitzGerald has also failed to fulfill his promise on coming into politics in the Republic: to create a pluralist society which would be attractive to Unionists. Just four days after the Hillsborough Agreement the *Irish Times* reported that non-Catholics or lapsed Catholics will not be considered for jobs in state-funded schools controlled by the Catholic church.

The church will oppose any introduction of divorce in the Republic as stridently as it supported the constitutional amendment reinforcing the ban on abortion.

Although FitzGerald's government won a small victory over the Catholic hierarchy on the liberalisation of the contraceptive laws earlier this year, FitzGerald feels that his government would lose a referendum on liberalising divorce if it were held at the moment.

The Unionists FitzGerald so wanted to befriend he now has been forced to betray. The Anglo-Irish process, initiated by Haughey in 1980, was originally opposed by FitzGerald because it left a million Unionists out in the cold. The Anglo-Irish process has now effected FitzGerald's political recovery, but the Unionists are still shivering convulsively. □

SWISS BANK ACCOUNT

HOW TO HUNT A WITCH

IAN WILLIAMS exposes the bankrupt politics if not coffers of Liverpool's Militant leaders, and looks at the grounds for a Labour Party inquiry

MILITANT'S never-never land has now come to a fairy tale ending, in which the gnomes of Zurich have come to the aid of the moles of Merseyside. But the ending isn't the happy-ever-after version.

Out of sheer bloody-mindedness Militant refused painless and advantageous options from Stonefrost's report and concocted a package which is like a short financial fuse, timed to explode under whoever's in power next April. It may mean that they don't expect for whatever reason to be around when it blows up. That's not unlikely, since the package completely belies the horror stories of 80 and even 200 per cent rate increases brandished by Militant councillors when they adopted the former

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Liberal low-rate policy.

Phillips and Drew, the stockbrokers who arranged this deal, admitted it's been under discussion since August and possible for weeks, implying that Liverpool's people have been cynically and unnecessarily manipulated to the very brink of financial, social and indeed nervous breakdown.

The Militants' climbdown was as unbalanced as if they'd had the breakdown. Predictably, scapegoats came wholesale. National Labour Party leaders, trade union leaders national and local, even workers who'd voted to accept Stonefrost (which is all of them except the notorious GMB branch 5) each got their moment of venom.

Even other Labour authorities were cast almost as antagonists to claim a partial victory in getting money off them.

Equally predictably, the 'campaign' carries on, but voters wonder who the target is, as £10,000 was found to retrieve a civic limousine from the bailiffs while fuel-less schools closed.

The government is hardly mentioned — and certainly completely untouched and unharmed by the 'campaign'. It takes Militant to allow the Tories to capitalise politically on the agonies of a city which is moribund testimony to the failure of both capitalism and Thatcherism.

PRESSURE is building up from the media and from the unions whose members are most at risk from a renewed 'campaign'. If Neil Kinnock is to retain the benefits of the Bournemouth Factor then *something* very visible has to be done. And the chosen weapon of the Right on the National Executive Committee won't be a surgically precise ice-pick, but more in the line of a pick-axe handle.

The Left will be lucky to get away with a dissolution of the District party and an inquiry, under the circumstances, but there are signs anyway that their antipathy to so-called 'witchhunts' is weakening. The Revolutionary Socialist League's rhetoric in the pages of *Militant* misses the point about 'witchhunts'. Generally they are opposed by democrats because *innocent* people are wrongly persecuted as witches.

Not only does the shambles of Liverpool's 'campaign' lead immediately to a verdict of 'guilty as hell' on those who've dined out politically on the strength of their influence on events, but their strident screams of treachery at the whole of the rest of the movement won't encourage their increasingly defensive defenders.

By implication, to shield Militant is to defend the 31,000 redundancies and the futile attempt to blackmail an uncaring government by closing down the very jobs and services of the slogans. It is to defend the untruths by which they attempted to con everybody that there was no option but civic suicide.

What seems by consensus to be the minimal approach is an inquiry into and probably suspension of the District Labour Party. It's been under scrutiny for a while with regional officials attending meetings. One immediate area of interest will be the local habit of 'aggregate' District Labour Party meetings which not only delegates but all party members may attend, so 'visitors' often outnumber delegates. Needless to say visitors tend to be those on the tendency's bush telegraph.

But one of the major differences from other cities is the make-up of the delegates and the claimed power of the District Labour Party over the councillors and indeed over the constituency parties. As an inheritance from its days as a combined Trades and Labour Council, union branches affiliate directly. While the city's 33 wards regardless of membership have one delegate each and the six constituencies have seven members each, every union branch may affiliate for up to five delegates. A ward with, say, 100 party members may be outvoted fivefold by a union branch which may only actually have five individual party members, all delegates.

Over the last few years, the numbers of union delegates, especially from council workers, has increased tremendously, so that the two biggest union blocs can outvote the entire direct party delegation at the DLP as well as exercising a major role in the selection of the seven delegates per constituency. If delegations are anything to go by, the General and Municipal Workers' Union (GMB) has become very politically conscious in the two years of Labour rule, and can now muster over 50 delegates.

The Labour Party's own rule book has the constituency parties as sovereign bodies under the National Executive Committee, with the role of the District as administrative and consultative. In Liverpool, history (in the form of the struggles against the older version of city bosses) developed the doctrine of the District's sovereignty — firstly over the councillors but, as it came under the centralist influence of Militant, also over the constituency parties. The rule invoked seems to be 'all power to whichever body is under our thumb'.

Although fairly painless — possibly even beneficial — nationally, disciplinary action would cause problems in Liverpool. There is the problem of the 48 councillors surcharged for carrying out national policy, and a strongly belligerent civic chauvinism resentful of outside interference, combined with a support for Militant now based as much on municipal patronage as on politics.

A firm protest against the government's attitudes and a condemnation of the District Auditor's action from the national leadership would assist the middle ground in the Liverpool party.

But apart from that, there is a political vacuum, and not only in Liverpool, with the Left in the Labour Party allowing Militant both to write the political agenda and define the left-right spectrum. Initiatives like David Blunkett's demonstrate a desire for distance from the sloganeers and sectarians, but distancing is no good if they're still used as the reference point for leftness.

It is clearly time for the work done by the subcommittee on a definition of democratic socialism to be published — and proselytised — throughout the Labour movement. Perhaps as a footnote it could include the sad story of Liverpool, an example of how simplistic slogans can lead to complex and sordid manipulations and twistings. □

Ian Williams is a member of Liverpool Labour Party.

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MEDIA

Après Lord H may come le déluge noir

FRANCIS WHEEN

PERHAPS it's the impending new millennium; perhaps it's the arrival of Halley's comet. Whatever the reason, Fleet Street has been in an even greater frenzy than usual this year.

Robert Maxwell has been blundering around Holborn Circus like a rogue elephant on speed. Lord Matthews has lost the Express group to United Newspapers. Almost everyone has been cashing in Reuter's shares. Rupert Murdoch has been preparing to launch his new London paper, the *Post*. Eddie Shah has been preparing to launch *his* new paper. And now, to prove that the times are out of joint, the journalists at the *Telegraph* have passed unanimously a motion of no confidence in the paper's management.

Such an act of rebellion would be surprising enough at any newspaper, but at the *Telegraph* it is astonishing. The *Daily Telegraph* and its Sunday sibling have been successful for as long as anyone can remember. Moreover, the papers' managers have always assumed that the benevolent paternalism with which the firm is run by Lord Hartwell — the *Telegraph*'s owner, chairman and editor-in-chief — would ensure the loyalty of the editorial staff. What can have gone wrong?

Oddly enough, the cause of the paper's current crisis is the same reason for its previous success. Unlike most other Tory papers (the *Daily Express* or *The Times*, for instance) the *Telegraph* is not only Conservative but also conservative. Its design is so archaic as to be downright eccentric. A certain greyness of style is encouraged in the journalists. Nothing ever changes.

There has never been any obvious need for change. The paper may not win many journalistic awards, but it has won a devoted and large readership of middle-class, middle-brow people who find its old-fashioned ways rather reassuring.

But now some of those readers have shown themselves capable of disloyalty to the old firm. While sales of the *Guardian* and *The Times* have shot up in the past year or two, the *Telegraph*'s circulation has fallen. Its ABC figure for April-September 1985 was 1,211,877, a drop of more than 40,000 from the same period in 1984.

In itself this isn't necessarily catastrophic. After all, the *Telegraph* still sells more copies than the *Guardian, Times* and *FT* put together. What has brought about the present crisis is the *Telegraph*'s decision to modernise its printing equipment. To this end it is investing in new printing plant in Manchester and in the Isle of Dogs, London, and is negotiating redundancy payments for printers who will be laid off.

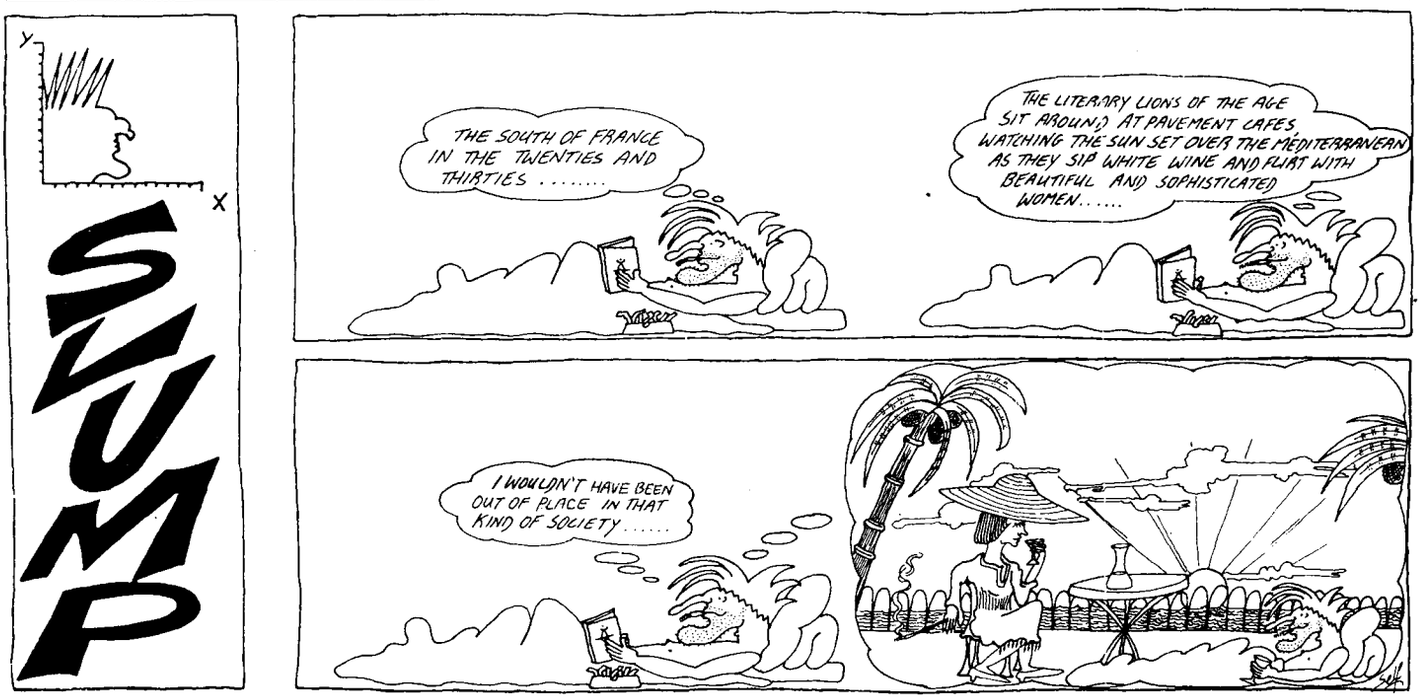
This will all cost a great deal of money — at least £140 million. The *Telegraph* doesn't have that kind of money and the reason, once again, is related to the conservatism of the paper's management. Unlike every other paper in Fleet Street, the *Telegraph* has never 'diversified' out of newspapers. It has no large stakes in television companies or launderettes or whatever. The only way in which it can raise cash is by selling shares or borrowing.

In May it set about doing just that, with a 'refinancing package' which aimed to raise £80 million in loans and £29 million in share placings. To the *Telegraph*'s surprise, financial institutions were extremely reluctant to put up any money. Their main objections were that Hartwell's family, the Berrys, would retain absolute control of the company and that there was no promise of a change in management personnel.

Far from it: the preliminary memo issued to potential share buyers revealed that Hartwell's two sons were to join the board and expressed the hope that 'the eventual successor to Lord Hartwell will be a member of the Berry family'. The document added: 'No director shall be disqualified or required to vacate his office by reason of his having attained the age of 70 any other age.' One can see why this provision was included. Hartwell himself is 74. His deputy chairman, Lord Camrose, is 76. The managing director, H. M. Stephen, is 69. Bill Deedes, the *Daily Telegraph*'s editor, is 72. But it wasn't likely to convince the City that the *Telegraph* was in a fit state to face the challenges of the next five years.

In the end the money was raised, but only by the last-minute sale of a 14 per cent stake in the *Telegraph* to the Canadian financier Conrad Black. And now, only five months later, it is already clear that the money raised earlier this year was not enough for the paper's needs. If Hartwell is forced to sell more of his family's stake, Black has first refusal on these shares. Little is known about Black in this country, but we know enough to be certain that he's not a particularly attractive piece of work whose political attitudes make Lord Hartwell look like a pinko.

The Left's soft spot for the aristocracy is one of the phenomena of our time. Just as Ken Livingstone found himself saying nice things about the House of Lords (and just as toffs such as Ian Gilmour and Francis Pym seem quite decent types by comparison with the Thatcher-Tebbit deluge that followed), so in years to come we may find ourselves remembering Lord Hartwell's tenure at the *Telegraph* with something like fondness. □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SUMP
THE SOUTH OF FRANCE IN THE TWENTIES AND THIRTIES .....
THE LITERARY LIONS OF THE AGE SIT AROUND AT PAVEMENT CAFES, WATCHING THE SUN SET OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN AS THEY SIP WHITE WINE AND FLIRT WITH BEAUTIFUL AND SOPHISTICATED WOMEN.....
I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN OUT OF PLACE IN THAT KIND OF SOCIETY.....

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DIARY

Was it a good summit? There won't be an agreement on Star Wars until the Americans learn they can't afford it, so it is a pity Gorbachev did not use the occasion to denounce Reagan and all his works. But I'm not convinced that the Left in the West would have benefited, let alone Moscow, from such plain talk in public. Let's hope there was indeed some of it in private and that the Soviets do not make themselves dependent on US goodwill — as they did during the Vietnam war when they received Nixon in the Kremlin while he mined North Vietnam. Otherwise next year Gorbachev may find himself shaking hands in the White House while the marines storm Nicaragua. But at least the Russian leader cut a good figure in public. The one recent action of Neil Kinnock I endorse completely has been his change of hair style: from an Arthur Scargill, with thin strands combed across a balding front, to a Micky Gorbachev lookalive. This is a genuine head forward. Provided Kinnock is not also hankering for a role on the world stage — the dementia that often accompanies Parliamentary fixation.

○

It surfaces in Jeffrey Archer's pathetic yet fascinating novel *First Amongst Equals*. This has a 'Big Three' summit meeting at Geneva in which a disarmament agreement between Russia and America is spoilt by the vigorous participation of Mrs Thatcher. To be sure she would have ruined completely the fireside exchanges of Gorbachev and Reagan. But her absence was not due to such personal considerations as the domineering nature of her company. Britain hardly counts, which is obvious enough. What is interesting about Archer's cloying fantasy is how, with all the emphasis on accuracy and detail, this big fact seems to escape not only his own attention but that of so many readers. Not that his details are so impressive either: the newly appointed vice-chairman of the Conservative Party doesn't have the slightest idea of the population of Northern Ireland, for example.*

○

Yet his book captures something: it rings true about the falseness of Parliamentary life. The four characters, or rather types, who compete to become Prime Minister are followed from the early '60s through to the late '80s, a period of repeated economic crisis and massive political decline; from the time when a Prime Minister really was one of the world's 'Big Three'. Yet in no way does Archer's account take the weight of social upheavals or global change. Instead, his is a dream world that fiddles with itself. To return to a theme of my last diary, it is a picture of Parliamentary consensus politics. Indeed in so far as the book sustains a thin excitement it is because one cannot guess which of the protagonists will become Prime Minister, for the simple reason that their politics and priorities are interchangeable. Also the *sole* thing that arouses their and evidently the author's ire is the re-selection of MPs, presented as the horny hand of Trotskyism banging on the doors of the gilded cage. Which confirms that the Labour Left can take credit for at least one contribution to democracy.

○

A far more vivid sense of what goes on in politics is shown in *The Writing on the Wall*, Phillip Whitehead's Channel 4 series about the '70s. It was appalling to watch Simon, then US Treasury Secretary, relate how in 1976 he dictated the scale of the Labour government cuts from the back of Webbs the tailors in Mayfair. That was in last Sunday's programme. I've also pre-viewed the next one, 'Clash of Freedoms' made by Cate Haste. It ends with a clever point from Peter York. Both Reactionary Chic and Proletarian Punk were a response to what he calls the end of the liberal consensus: the belief, as he sees it, that we share a common future. Inspired by the programmes, I went to see Harold Wilson talking about the Attlee government at the National Museum of Labour History. Questioned about the Alliance he summed up his particular preference for those times. 'I want an election of A's versus B's', Wilson said, and 'if you can't have a Labour government I'd rather have a Conservative one'.

○

Another organ from the epoch of A's versus B's is the *Daily Mirror*, where Maxwell has done the impossible and made it worse. Last summer when he took it over it sold 3.5 million copies. Now on some days it has apparently sold below 3 million. This proves what I have always believed: *Mirror* readers are not stupid. And it gives the projected GLC-backed *News on Sunday* a real chance. It's just a pity that Maxwell is in the position to state the obvious about over-staffing. As everyone who writes with one knows, computers mean genuine progress. So it may be possible for the *Mirror* to be turned round in terms of profitability. But I doubt that it can be resurrected as an effective paper of the Left.

Not that the *Mirror* was ever socialist, but it could occasionally tell its readers how they were being screwed. Sometimes it delivered a model of forthright, campaigning prose. Usually it suffocated its readers with what I call 'mateyism'. This was a caricature of *man*'s style of speech, spoken by none, that thrust a subordinate folk-talk of 'us again the toffs' into circulation, so that it became somehow pretentious for a worker to use a long sentence or to have the power to be articulate. I reflected on this reading Keith Waterhouse's *The Mirror's Way with Words*. I've just bought a copy — symbolically, its spine has cracked already. Today Waterhouse is a jaundiced columnist who says little of interest. In the style book he celebrates street English for growing 'ever more expressive and colourful', yet on the next page calls for a 'modern supply of plain English', without any sense that this might be contradictory. Similarly he praises a *Mirror* style but damns its actual ways. Thus in a fine entry, he attacks tabloidese for being essentially passive:

> In tabloid land, *400 jobs face axe*. In real life, 400 men may lose their jobs. Intended to be dramatic, tabloidese has a curiously deadening effect.

Precisely. For the *News on Sunday* to succeed it must give readers something not only more radical than the *Mirror* but also intellectually lively and well written.

Islander

ROGER WODDIS

They're leaving home

'This is not a terribly attractive place for tourists' — a Liverpool spokesman on the decision to move the Beatles exhibition to London

Tuesday morning we heard the news
as the day began.
Cymbals belonging to Ringo Starr
John's old piano and George's guitar
Paul's suits — all leaving the city
leaving it derelict
robbed and rotten with bankruptcy
nothing worth going to see.

They (We knew them most of our lives)
are leaving (Sang to us most of our lives)
home (They who had everything money could buy)
they've got to go after being on show
for so many years. Bye, bye.

Next six months or it may be nine
they'll be far away
far from the city they partially made
now a mere shell from the loss of trade.

They (What did we do that was wrong?)
are leaving (Liverpool gone for a song)
home (Where is the sun that once shone in the sky?)
Something has died that was always our pride
for so many years. Bye, bye.
They're leaving home bye bye.

*See p 136, the character speaking being supposedly an Under-Secretary at the Home Office, who covers for the government on Irish affairs: 'The issue of Ireland is far too important to be glib about,' he says. 'I repeat, we're discussing people, eight million people.'

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Camera Press

BOTHA EXTENDS DELICATE FEELERS

HOWARD BARRELL reports on the negotiating positions behind the week's 'will they, won't they' rumours of the release of black leader Nelson Mandela (above)

Harare

WHILE JOURNALISTS scurried around southern Africa last week, boosting the local air charter business and running up embarrassing expenses in their attempts to be wherever it was that Nelson Mandela would be after he had been freed, another drama was being played out behind the scenes.

The Southern African government was sending direct and clear signals to the leadership in exile of the outlawed African National Congress.

The message was as follows: The Pretoria government acknowledged that it alone could not now cope with the growing political and economic crisis in the country of which Mandela is the alter-president; it had taken a decision in principle to release not merely Mandela but *all* political prisoners; but it was having difficulty in deciding how to do this. The implication of this message was that the South African government needed a softening in ANC postures in order to carry through the policy that it now saw was necessary.

Details of the South African government signals were given to me at the weekend by well-placed sources in the Frontline States. For its part, the ANC has declined to confirm or deny the receipt of these signals. The South African government has denied the story and called it part of a 'disinformation' campaign. Pretoria added that it had no plans to release Mandela, who at 67 has now been in jail for 23 years.

The evidence contradicts this. About three months ago, according to my sources, Pik Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, requested the Mozambican President Samora Machel to ask the Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda what his attitude would be if Pretoria released Mandela and immediately put him on a flight out to Lusaka. Kaunda, a firm friend of the ANC and host to its headquarters, replied that Mandela would, of course, be welcome.

A while after Pik Botha's visit to Mozambique, which was largely concerned with patching up last year's Nkomati accord which, after months of denial, Pretoria has finally admitted was being violated by South Africa, the *Financial Mail* in Johannesburg carried a well-sourced 'flyer' from the corridors of power. What if, the *Mail* asked, Pretoria decided to release Mandela and fly him out to Zambia?

THE ANC and Mandela himself, through his wife Winnie, have rejected this option. Any release must be unconditional, they say. Pretoria, though, badly wants to get rid of this albatross. Even South Africa's international creditors have joined the ranks of those demanding the release of Mandela and other political concessions before they are prepared to reschedule South Africa's considerable foreign debt. Their motivation is in no way derived from moral imperatives. But Western bankers realise that only political reforms can restore economic stability to the country.

The position being taken by the ANC does not rule out an exchange of signals with Pretoria. A top ANC source said unofficially this week that it was up to the Botha government to create 'a climate conducive to talks about talks'. This required concrete action, he said. Signals alone would not convince the ANC of Pretoria's seriousness.

Pretoria could create the necessary climate by releasing all political prisoners unconditionally; by lifting the state of emergency that now blankets much of the country; by releasing emergency detainees; by pulling its troops out of the black townships; and by suspending political trials immediately.

The ANC, said this source, could then move to hold full consultations with those now in South Africa's jails and with leaders of the legal political organisations and trade unions inside the country. The ANC, as a matter of principle, would not begin talks with the Botha government without first holding these discussions. The fact of any talks between the ANC and Pretoria would have to be public knowledge.

Has the South African government shut off this process by taking Mandela from his hospital bed in Cape Town's Volkshospitaal last Saturday and returning him to his cell at Pollsmoor Prison?

There is a school of thought which maintains that it hasn't. What Pretoria has done is to remove Mandela from the view of the battery of journalists who had cordoned off the hospital while delicate feelers are exchanged. For his part, Mandela has signalled that he will not be a captive negotiating partner. He will negotiate only within the framework of the ANC and the broad legal democratic movement.

The precedent provided by the process which turned Rhodesia into Zimbabwe suggests that any process of negotiation in South Africa will be protracted and combined with continued political violence. Whatever Pretoria's embarrassment or the ANC's coyness, the signs are that process is, however, now started — however haltingly. □

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ROLLING BACK THE 20TH CENTURY

Rome's clerical reactionaries have wiped out all trace of reform. T. M. PASCA on the background to the Extraordinary Synod

Rome

IN THE VATICAN Museum's modern collection of 'Sacred and Profane Art' the largest single work is an impressive sculpture devoted to the Second Vatican Council. It is a series of bronze panels arranged in a room of its own.

Two rows of figures file along opposite walls, one led by Pope John XXIII, the other by the stooped profile of Pope Paul VI, the two popes of the Council. Following behind them are the people of the church, cardinals, bishops, priests, nuns and the faithful laity, all united as they converge on a symbolic sun-like representation of a single deity. Viewers standing in the middle of this room have the feeling that they are a part of both the sculpture and its subject.

Today, 20 years after the Council, the Pope, the hierarchy, the clergy and the faithful are no longer united or together, either about Vatican II or the direction in which their church is going. That is what the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops that began here on 24 November and will last until 8 December is all about. It will review the historic Council that, between 11 October 1962, when it was opened by John XXIII, and 8 December 1965, when it was closed by Paul VI, brought about some of the most important institutional changes in the history of the Roman Catholic Church.

This Synod, by its very nature, raises the question of whether the Catholic Church really has changed. Or whether, tied as it is deep within itself to some point in the Middle Ages, around the 13th century, it is indeed capable of changes or adaptations that respond to present needs and conditions. There is a considerable body of Catholics who believe that change is always anathema, by its very nature. To the Church, that is, for it is the Church, first and foremost, that they care about. They represent the fundamentalism of Catholicism.

The Synod is being attended by approximately 220 persons, of whom 165 are delegates with the right to vote. They are: 102 presidents of national episcopal conferences, 24 members of the Roman Curia, 14 patriarchs, archbishops and metropolitans of the eastern rite Catholic church united with Rome, the Secretary of the Synod, the superiors general of three religious orders (Jesuits, Salesian and Dominican) and 21 delegates nominated by the Pope. Only 63, or one-third, of these actually participated in the Council 20 years ago.

The non-voting participants consist of theologians and church leaders attending on the invitation of the Pope. Among them are three women known for their conservative positions on the role of women in the church — the best known being the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mother Theresa of Calcutta. The 10 observers from non-Catholic Christian denominations include Henry Chadwick, former Registrar Professor of Divinity at Oxford.

Perhaps the most significant fact about the composition of the 165 voting delegates is their geographic composition: 103 are from Third World countries and only 62 are from Europe and North America. The Third World accounted for only 40 per cent of the delegates at Vatican II; today they are 62 per cent.

All those attending this Synod, however, are well aware that they have been called together not so much to participate in a review of the Second Vatican Council as to learn precisely how the Council has been 're-interpreted' by the most conservative elements in the Vatican and replaced, for the record and for the sake of appearances, with something else more or less opposite to the original product. In effect, a main objective of the Synod is to give a decent burial both to Vatican II and to the controversy that has been raging around it and dividing the members of the Catholic hierarchy and its theologians for the past 20 years.

'A main objective of the Synod is to give a decent burial to Vatican II'

Those attending the Synod are expected to understand that Vatican II, with its spirit and its supposedly institutionalised elements, is dead and buried as far as the Pope is concerned. In its place the Synod will make a legalistic presentation of an altogether different Vatican II. Thus, officially and publicly, the Synod will in no way discredit the Council. In fact, it may now be praised by all, united.

That was the plan, the purpose and the wish of John Paul II when he opened this Synod. The success of this somewhat cosmetic theological and public relations function depends first on certain documents that became a part of Vatican II after the death of John XXIII, at the beginning of the pontificate of Paul VI. Once the pope who originated the Council was no longer there to inspire and protect it, the most reactionary and undemocratic elements in the Vatican, who had always been against the Council and were then horrified at what they saw as damaging and revolutionary developments, leaned heavily on Paul VI.

Reforms such as the 'collegiality' of bishops, the definitive declaration of ecumenical activities and many other progressive moves were seen by them as weakening the central authority of the papacy and the Vatican, from which came *their* authority. Famous for vacillation and indecision and prone to pressure from the Right, Paul VI authorised the insertion of material in the Council meetings that, in effect, contradicted both the spirit and the letter of the main line of the Council's thinking and work.

Many theologians were disturbed by this at the time, but it was easier to accept it as a gesture required by the new Pope in order to placate a defeated but still significant right wing within the Church which, in any event, was considered by the optimistic liberals to be dead leaves waiting to fall off the tree. But they never fell off. In fact, they are now looking for ways to have Pope Paul VI declared a saint.

The liberal theologians who controlled the Council — they came especially from France, Holland and West Germany — thought that they also controlled the Church. They could not imagine that their work would be repudiated by Rome in only 20 years. Many of them still feel that, although repudiated, the spirit and the effect of what they accomplished in the 1960s is indeed still at work in the Church. If they are right, then there are two versions of Roman Catholicism, because this is certainly not the way Pope John Paul II looks at matters.

AN ESSENTIALLY fundamentalist pope and those who are most narrow in their view of religion and the world, such as the members and supporters of the semi-secret Opus Dei order that has become a major power in the Vatican under John Paul II, are fully aware what the Second Vatican Council means to the rank and file of priests, nuns and practising Catholics throughout the world. To these people, especially, the Council was as important as any declaration of independence can be for individuals who want to be both free and loyal as regards their religious conscience and their church.

But to Catholic fundamentalists that stance smacks of secularism, Protestantism and, to use the euphemism of the turn of the century that is back in vogue in Rome, 'modernism'. All the more reason, then, in the thinking of the Pope, to utilise this Synod as a forum in which to gain broad agreement among the hierarchy to stop controversy spreading any further, to bury it, along with the reforms of the Council, for the sake of a united church. The inspiring sculpture in the Vatican Museum will, in any event, remain where it is to assure its viewers that the Council, however they care to interpret it, is honoured in Rome.

Even the decision to call an Extraordinary rather than an Ordinary Synod is part of the effort to avoid further division in the Church. The rules for an Ordinary Synod allow each national church democratically to elect its own delegate. Under those circumstances many national churches would have sent bishops who were strong supporters of Vatican II and effective, outspoken opponents of the positions

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held by the Pope and his supporters. This, in itself, would have been in the spirit of the Council, which was enough to make it unacceptable.

The protocol for an Extraordinary Synod, however, requires that the delegates should be presidents of their national episcopal conferences, thereby ensuring that the 165 delegates will be senior churchmen, most of them older in years than their colleagues at home, and tending to be conservatives as well, or at least cautious about disagreeing with the Pope and the Curia.

There are, however, some well-known liberals among the delegates, such as the Franciscan Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider of Brazil, a leading theologian in his own right and a supporter of the Liberation Theology movement in his country. He could not be left out and comes by personal invitation of the Pope. The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, George Basil Hume, a Benedictine monk, who is President of the Conference of Bishops of England and Wales as well as the regional European Conference of Bishops, will be listened to with respect by many, but especially by members of the English speaking and British Commonwealth episcopates. He has already registered concern about subjects that the Pope would rather not discuss.

These include a more open handling of Vatican scandals — financial and otherwise; a wider and more equitable role for women in the Church; more sympathetic treatment for priests who seek to marry but still carry on their ministry in at least some form; and the fundamental struggle over the Vatican's tightening of its central authority against the desire of national episcopates to deal with their affairs with more autonomy.

One of the three presidents of the Synod is Cardinal Joseph Malula of Zaire, who is considered an independent voice and one that is taken seriously by the African bishops, who tend increasingly to go their own way.

These and other like-minded participants in the Synod will also find at least moral support, quiet as it is likely to be, among certain cardinals and bishops who occupy important posts within the Vatican. They are, so to say, sleepers who are waiting for times to change again.

The Synod, then, is not only concerned with the interment of Vatican II and the presentation of a false copy. And it is not simply a rigged congress. The great diversity of the Catholic church's membership, together with the seriousness, determination and competition among its bishops, make that impossible.

The Synod is also seen genuinely by the Pope, the Curea and the hierarchy as a whole as a major meeting at which everyone — but especially John Paul II himself — will have the opportunity to gauge the amount and the quality of support and opposition to the present policy of restoration or counter-reformation that is being carried out by a fundamentalist pope supported by some of the most uncompromising clerical reactionaries that they Church has seen in many years.

One other point about this Synod will be in the minds of all those who are attending. The next Pope is almost certainly sitting among them. □

T. M. Pasca writes for the Nation *in New York.*

SPYING

REVENGE OF THE MOLE-HUNTERS

CLAUDIA WRIGHT on the trapping of Israeli agents who have penetrated the US government

Washington

THE ARREST OF Jonathan Jay Pollard, a young civilian analyst working for US Navy intelligence, has so far been portrayed by the US press as yet another case of an unstable personality selling US secrets to foreign governments for cash. Had Pollard not telephoned an Israeli intelligence agent to beg for help — on a line tapped by the FBI — and then made a desperate attempt to evade the FBI and seek asylum in the Israeli embassy in Washington, he might have been overshadowed by the growing cast of soap opera spies that have been falling into US government hands recently. The Israeli government might have succeeded in its cover-up before the publicity did much damage.

One of the first Israelis caught spying in Washington was none other than Chaim Herzog, now President of Israel, who was the Israeli military attache in Washington in 1953-54. But he was tipped off by a State Department official and left the country before the FBI had time to act — the State Department man was dismissed and records of the case sealed for more than a quarter of a century.

In 1979, the first Congressional official investigated by the FBI for passing secrets to Israel — a Senate committee staffer, Stephen Bryen — was able to get the Justice Department to overrule an FBI recommendation that he be brought before a grand jury, and the records of that case were also covered up (see *NS* 6 May 1983). In the past two years, several men investigated by the FBI and indicted for various offences, including the illegal export of nuclear materials and arms to Israel, have been allowed out of jail on bail and have fled. FBI agents have been looking for revenge and with the Pollard case, they may have found it.

According to associates and friends of Pollard, before he joined Navy intelligence in 1979, he made no secret of his recruitment to work for Israeli intelligence. He told an associate at Stanford University where he was an undergraduate between 1972 and 1976 that he had already received military and intelligence training in Israel. In his Navy resumé he claimed he had spent several months in 1975-76 at the Atlantic Institute for International Affairs in Paris. But an associate at Stanford has told the *NS* that Pollard said he used the Paris institute as a cover for Israeli intelligence work.'

In 1977 Pollard started graduate studies at the Fletcher School of Law and Philosophy at Tufts University, near Boston, and a year later, according to his resumé, he was associated with the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis Inc. (IFPA), a consultancy and an offshoot of the Fletcher School. Several people at the Fletcher School and the IFPA have had close links with the Israeli security establishment and, after the Reagan Administration began in 1981, with US policymakers active on Middle East affairs.

Geoffrey Kemp left the Fletcher faculty to become the National Security Council staff specialist on the Middle East; Richard Burt and Scott Thompson also moved into US foreign policy posts from the Fletcher School. Richard Perle, a well-known supporter of Israel and Assistant Secretary of Defense, has been a consultant for the IFPA in the past and has hired the IFPA director, Robert Pfaltzgraff, and other IFPA associates as his Pentagon consultants. One IFPA associate, Amoretta Hoeber, is a high-ranking civilian official of the US army, while her husband, Frank Hoeber, a Washington military consultant, works with the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), a Washington group promoting US technology transfer to Israel's arms industry and Israeli defence sales to the Pentagon. JINSA was founded by Stephen Bryen. When he was hired by Perle to be his deputy at the Pentagon, JINSA was taken over by his wife, Shoshana Bryen.

WASHINGTON OFFICIALS have long acknowledged the significance of these sort of legal, academic and consultancy networks in Israel's information-gathering and lobbying activities. They note that in recruiting informants for intelligence work there is, as in Pollard's case, a pattern of early recruitment, periods of apparent academic study abroad — the London School of Economics was a favourite choice for MOSSAD (Israeli secret service) cover in the 1960s — and special language training, followed by US government employment in areas of special interest to the Israelis.

Pollard, for example, told the Navy in 1979 he could read and write Afrikaans. But a Notre Dame professor (of South African origin), who gave him an introductory course on South Africa, says Pollard didn't know the language when he taught him in 1975-76. That means he learned it somewhere in the intervening years — and it is rarely taught in the US. The *NS* has been told by an associate of Pollard's that Pollard had told him he had been involved in Israeli arms sale transactions with Rhodesia and South Africa. By the late 1970s Pollard was telling associates he had been given the rank of colonel in Israeli intelligence with the mission 'to infiltrate the US government on behalf of Israel's intelligence'.

Pollard's first navy job in 1979 was as a shipping analyst at the Navy's operations intelligence centre in the Washington suburbs. By late 1983 he had become a specialist on the Middle East and was assigned to anti-terrorism intelligence at the Naval Investigative Service. Immediately after the lethal attack on the US Marine barracks in Beirut in October of that year, the Pentagon ordered a reorganisation of its intelligence bureacracy, pushing each of the services to establish improved anti-terrorism

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alert centres and co-ordinating the effort under the direction of Noel Koch, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defence; Koch's job before he came to the Pentagon was as the chief lobbyist of the Zionist Organisation of America.

For all practical purposes, anti-terrorism intelligence in this context meant US intelligence on the Arabs and Iran. It included communications intercepts gathered by US listening stations in Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and Pakistan, radar and other data gathered by US aerial patrols flown in the Mediterranean and the Gulf, satellite photographs, and possibly also military data and codes used by Israel, Greece, Turkey and other US allies in the region.

IN THE CRIMINAL complaint filed in US court, the FBI said Pollard had been passing classified documents between May 1984 and November 1985 — Israel was not mentioned in the complaint, but this has been confirmed by investigators in the case. How much US and NATO data, codes and sources may have been compromised is not yet known, but Pollard was in a much more central position than US reports have so far indicated. With access to the intelligence flowing into the Navy alert centre from similar units in the army, Air Force and Marine Corps, the CIA, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency, Pollard could have given Israel what the US would not normally share — notably data identifying Israeli operations targetted against Americans and American interests in Lebanon and elsewhere in the Middle East.

It has been asked why Israel would infiltrate agents into US intelligence agencies when it already benefits from an extensive intelligence-sharing agreement. CIA documents obtained from the US embassy in Teheran reveal considerable US reluctance to provide the Israelis with intelligence on its sources in post-revolutionary Iran. In the investigation of the Bryen case US officials also revealed their refusal to supply Israel with data on Saudi air bases. A CIA report of 1979 conceded that the 'principal targets' of Israeli intelligence activity included 'secret US policy or decisions, if any, concerning Israel', promotion of 'arms deals for the benefit of the IDF', 'Data for use in silencing anti-Israel factions in the West', and 'penetration (of) certain defense projects in the United States and other Western nations.'

US navy intelligence officers have been reluctant to share information with the Israelis. They have not forgotten that in June 1967 the Israelis were responsible for killing 34 American crewmen of the intelligence ship, USS *Liberty*, which was strafed and torpedoed in international waters while monitoring Israeli and Egyptian military communications. At the end of 1974, when James Angleton, head of the CIA's Israel desk and of counter-intelligence, was forced out of the Agency, there was a decline in intelligence-sharing.

Pollard is not the first alleged mole US officials believe Israel is running inside the US government. Many believe the pattern in Pollard's case fits a number of higher-level US officials.

If under pressure Pollard believes he may be sacrificed, he may threaten to name others who are MOSSAD moles in the hope of earning a plea bargain with prosecutors. If that happens, Pollard's case may unravel a much larger network of informants than the FBI agents reckoned on catching □

This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (On postcards please).

□A new Falklands war computer game has caused a storm — because the Argentinians can win. In the game the British fleet tries to land forces on the islands, but they only have a 50-50 chance of routing the Argentinians. — *Yorkshire Post* (P. O'R. Smiley)

□Bluff butcher Barry Onslow sent animal lovers hopping mad when he advertised rabbit meat for sale: Watership Down — you've read the book, you've seen the film . . . now EAT THE CAST. Rabbits £1.50 each. — *The Mirror* (Gillian Wallington)

□Plans by a bus company to charge more for going up a hill than down it are being opposed. Cumberland Motor Services wants to charge more to travel out of the harbour of Whitehaven. Cumbria county council's public transport committee yesterday opposed the idea which it described as ludicrous. — The *Guardian* (Tamsyn Williams)

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LETTERS

Some thoughts on abortion

Mary Kenny, London W1

Two things interest me in terms of political analyses of this subject. First, this emphasis on choice. Choice is a valuable concept and some would indeed hold that its roots are in the doctine of Free Will: but it is also the catchword, the cornerstone, of New Right liberalism. If you read the essays of the young New Right economists and writers, everything is based on choice, and competition and the free market runs on it. So when feminist-socialists base the brunt of their argument on 'choice', too, I am intrigued. I have read books about abortion, based on a feminist and allegedly Marxist analysis of the subject which, if you substituted the word 'economic' for 'abortion', what you would have is a perfect argument for monetarism and Thatcherism! 'We want abortion (economic) freedom: we have a right to abortion (economic) freedom, to make our abortion (economic) choices in exactly the way we choose. And there should be no restrictions by outside agencies on our abortion (economic) choice.'

As a matter of fact, the Thatcher administration has shown no interest in abortion, and certainly no interest in restricting it. Mrs Thatcher (and Mr Tebbit) both voted for abortion freedom — and indeed Ian Gow (according to Sara Keays's book) thinks that abortion is something that a woman does for a man if she loves him! John Selwyn Gummer is considered a bit of an oddity in the Tory party: I am sure that his successor, Jeffrey Archer, is altogether in favour of freedom of choice in abortion. It fits in with the notion of individual freedom ruling everything, and also, it is cheaper than raising children (for the State).

I do see the point of 'choice' (and in such matters as education, I tend to favour it), but I think that from a political-philosophical viewpoint, socialists will have to come to grips with the fact that they are using the language of economic liberalism and New Right libertarianism. Significantly, Milton Friedman's autobiography was called '*Free to Choose*'.

The obsession with 'choice' underscores, too, the point that abortion is an optional operation. This certainly opens the way for the New Right to claim that while abortion choice is free as a private decision, it has no place at all in the National Health Service.

The second political aspect is that it seems to me that any fresh perspectives that are occurring with abortion itself are not due to morality, but to technology. Pregnant women are now quite often offered a routine scan at, say, 10 weeks' pregnancy, and they come away from this experience talking about seeing the baby, and sometimes even noticing the 'expression' on its face.

By all means go on blaming misogynists and religious fanatics for anti-abortion sentiments — every political movement needs an enemy and the usual enemy, the Catholic Church, is a robust opponent which always has and always will defend the unborn child. But ignoring the effects of the new fetal technology on attitudes to pregnancy is rather like writing about home entertainment today without considering the invention of the video-recorder. While barracking an old enemy — a new one may just be coming aroud the corner.

Felicity Phelps, East Molesey, Surrey

Julia South should beware of making hasty assumptions about people's beliefs. It is easy to classify people who oppose abortion as 'the New Right'. I oppose abortion on demand yet I can establish socialist credentials — as a member of the Labour Party, CND, a Greenham Women supporter, a member of anti-apartheid, etc. etc.

I joined CND to oppose the slaughter of future generations — how on earth, then, can I be expected to endorse abortion on demand?

Journalists nowadays tend to assume a certain portfolio of beliefs which go together. It's nice to have us all labelled and put in convenient pigeonholes. Allow us a little latitude for individual beliefs, please.

Betty Mackey, Nuneaton

Forgive me, but I am totally disorientated. Here I am, accustomed to being told that I would be happier on a plane to Moscow, and now, at a stroke, Julia South has me translated through the political spectrum and I find myself described as right-wing. I wish she would convince Mr Heseltine. Of course, she must be right. Look at all these radical lefties who support abortion — Margaret Thatcher, Edwina Currie, Kenneth Clarke, and then further afield people like Hugh Heffner and the Rockefeller Foundation. Revolutionaries all!

Personally I can think of nothing more fascist that the doctrine that says that one human being is entitled to kill another if, a) he/she is physically or mentally 'imperfect'; or b) his/her continued living will cause inconvenience. I don't know what sort of socialism Ms South practices — mine has always led me to give protection to the weak and vulnerable members of society. The idea that certain elements of humanity may be disposed of because they are 'unwanted' was a concept much favoured by certain members of the Third Reich. As an anti-imperialist campaigner I would have expected her to be against the exploitation and domination of one group of people by another. Surely the power of life and death is the ultimate domination.

But then, I found the whole article dishonest in the extreme. M/s South did not attempt to address herself to any of the arguments advanced by the pro-life movement, nor indeed to the basic tenet of the humanity of the foetus. The only motivation for her rallying call is protection of privilege. How right-wing can you get?

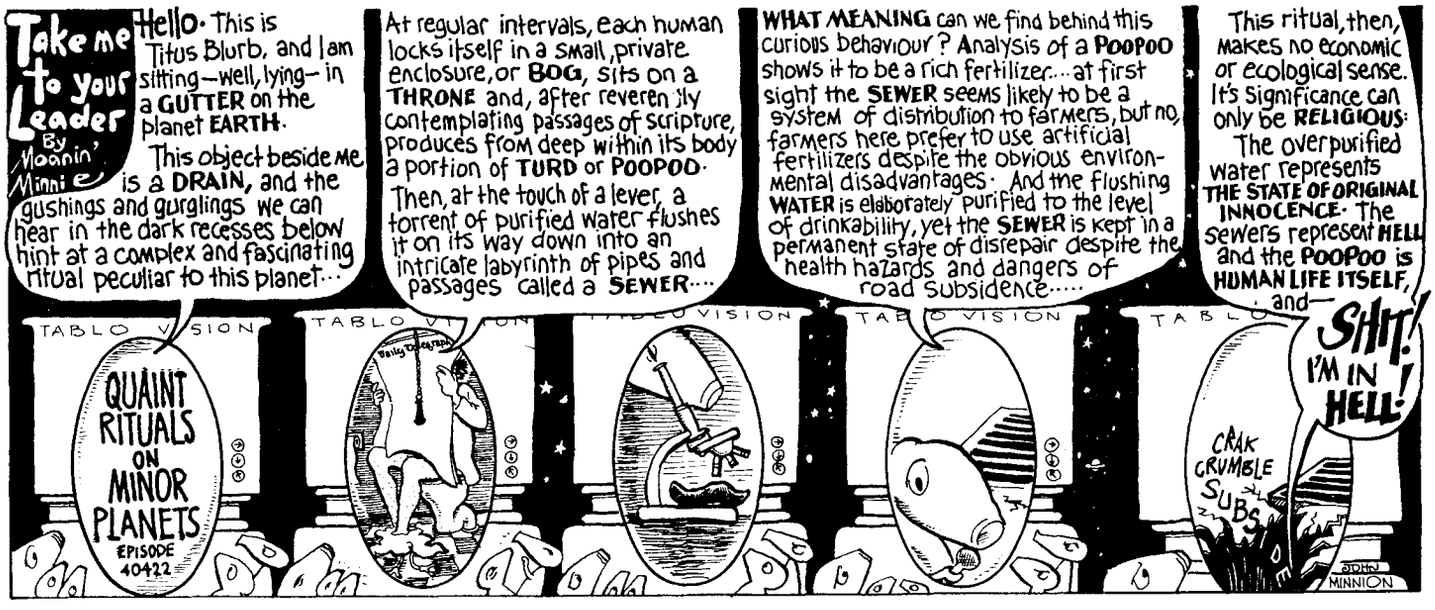
Did you know . . .

Margaret Pedler, Director, Local Government Information Unit, London EC1

Whilst wecoming Tony Traver's overview (*NS* 15 Nov.), I feel that your readers deserve to know in greater detail about the latest Local Government Bill and the threat it poses to freedom of expression in this country and the right of individual citizens to be fully informed.

Part II of the Bill deals with local authority publicity. The government claims that it is based on the interim report of the Widdicombe Inquiry. But the gap between it and the report is wide. The general philosophy behind Widdicombe's conclusion was that certain reforms, largely aimed at clarifying existing law, were needed but that these whould not involve new restrictions. The new Bill goes far beyond this and potentially undermines the basis for informed debate in this country.

Clause Two of the legislation is at the heart of the matter. It bans a local authority from publishing any material which appears to be designed to affect public support for a body, cause or campaign likely to be regarded as identified with a political party. This is ludicrously wide. It will affect material on council house sales, selective


Take me to your Leader
By Moanin' Minnie
Hello. This is Titus Blurb, and I am sitting—well, lying—in a GUTTER on the planet EARTH.
This object beside me is a DRAIN, and the gushings and gurglings we can hear in the dark recesses below hint at a complex and fascinating ritual peculiar to this planet...
At regular intervals, each human locks itself in a small, private enclosure, or BOG, sits on a THRONE and, after reverently contemplating passages of scripture, produces from deep within its body a portion of TURD or POOPOO.
Then, at the touch of a lever, a torrent of purified water flushes it on its way down into an intricate labyrinth of pipes and passages called a SEWER...
WHAT MEANING can we find behind this curious behaviour? Analysis of a POOPOO shows it to be a rich fertilizer... at first sight the SEWER seems likely to be a system of distribution to farmers, but no, farmers here prefer to use artificial fertilizers despite the obvious environmental disadvantages. And the flushing WATER is elaborately purified to the level of drinkability, yet the SEWER is kept in a permanent state of disrepair despite the health hazards and dangers of road subsidence.....
This ritual, then, makes no economic or ecological sense. It's significance can only be RELIGIOUS: The overpurified water represents THE STATE OF ORIGINAL INNOCENCE. The sewers represent HELL and the POOPOO is HUMAN LIFE ITSELF, and—
SHIT! I'M IN HELL!
TABLO VISION
QUAINT RITUALS ON MINOR PLANETS
EPISODE 40422
CRAK CRUMBLE SUBS
BORN MINNION

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education, social security reviews and privatisation — to name but a few issues — all of which are clearly matters of political dispute. But it will also prevent explanatory material sent out with rates demands from referring to rate rises resulting from loss of central government grant or rates being kept down through privatisation. The provisions of clause 2 are supplemented by a further clause banning local authority material not related to specific functions. This will affect material on police or transport in London, on nuclear free zones or anti-apartheid. Voluntary organisations funded by local government will be subject to similar restrictions.

Having silenced their critics, the government will of course remain free to publicise its own views at taxpayers' expense. Since coming to power in 1979, the present government has spent £2.9m on 11 politically controversial publicity campaigns including council house sales, abolition and rate-capping. Such 'information' campaigns will continue but without the benefit of an alternative point of view.

This is a dangerous Bill designed to ensure that those opposing central government measures are denied an effective voice. It must be defeated.

About face

Greg Philo, Glasgow University Media Group

John Gretton suggests that Phillip Whitehead has 'bowed to pressure' from the Glasgow University Media Group (Letters 22 Nov.) presumably because Whitehead reported that a critique of our work is currently being promoted by ITN. But what possible pressure could we bring to bear? Whitehead actually endorsed criticisms of our work calling it 'simplistic', saying that we had 'self-styled, scientific methods' (*NS* 15 Nov.).

What surprised me was the change in Whitehead's views from his original comments on our book in the *Listener* in 1980. Here, he wrote that *Bad News* and *More Bad News* 'ought to be required reading for anyone who aspires to be a television journalist' and that our second volume 'greatly expands the study'.

What caused the change? Perhaps it was that in 1981 we published a study of the Labour Party which showed that the views which Whitehead happened to support received better coverage than those which he opposed. This was 'hardly reasonable', he explained. (*NS* 30 Jan. 1981). The moral is, if you don't like the results then blame the methodology. Mr Whitehead and ITN have at least this much in common.

Sunday trading

Peter Gibson, Director

Erica Smith (Letters 22 Nov.) is wrong to condemn Rob Edwards for his 'ignorance of the plight of tens of thousands of shop workers' supposedly caused by Sunday trading in Scotland. Sunday trading here has been legal for centuries and has become more common in recent years. Despite the puzzling controversy south of the border, Sunday trading remains a non-issue in Scotland, as Rob Edwards reported. In the one shop in six that opens regularly on Sundays, there is no difficulty in finding staff who want to work. I am certain that if any such difficulties existed, they would have been identified and publicised by opponents of Sunday trading.

FEEDBACK

The politics of rejection

THE PRESS's response to Miriam Stoppard's sugar-coated interview with Margaret Thatcher (*Woman to Woman,* 19 Nov ITV) has concentrated on the apparent lies. How could Thatcher claim she always had to earn a living when she married a millionaire? Why was her respectable petit bourgeois family so impoverished unless her 'stern' father was also an old skinflint? Was she really moved to tears by her father's archaic code of honour, or did she use glycerine drops?

But now the dust (or was it icing sugar?) is settling, it's time to ask more generally, why is Thatcher playing the 'woman' card? And is she wise to do so? Thatcher's discovery of the rich vein of womanhood is not exactly new. She came to power, after all, awash in images of the careful housewife haggling her way down the high street entrusted with the nation's purse. But there's a change of emphasis now. We had first wind of this when sometime ago she spoke on an external services interview of women's special qualities. Among them she listed women's greater ability to communicate, especially to other women, giving the laughable example of 'when Indira Ghandi and I are together'. Presumably their feminine intimacies included 'How many have you locked up today, dear?'

At the time feminists wondered uneasily if she was capitalising on the fact that 'woman' no longer signified 'trivia' or silliness' but rather positive strength and understanding. Certainly this was the emphasis of the Stoppard interview, which relentlessly exploited her femaleness — her involvment with family memories, marriage, childbirth, motherhood. To be a woman was used to suggest greater honesty, integrity and depth of feeling.

But perhaps Thatcher should think again before sharing any more of her cosy intimacies. In spite of Stoppard's sycophantic interview, we may have seen too much. Because what we saw was a classic case, someone stuck in a rigid and inflexible fantasy of her family, a fantasy which didn't manage to cover the glaring cracks and contradictions in her own life.

Thatcher's fantasy (one common to her class) was of the perfect childhood, marked by honest poverty and hard work, 'so much more *wholesome*'. Both her parents were marvellous and busy. Her Father (or 'Daddy' to which she quickly regressed) was self-educated. They read and argued together. Mummy didn't join in the arguments, she backed up Daddy and said things like, 'Daddy had a difficult day in the council standing up for his arguments' (sic). This is the language of the Janet and John books, triumphantly trumpeting sexual division, male power and the happy nuclear family. 'Look, says Mummy. Daddy has come in from work. Hurry, Margaret, help Daddy with his coat. Daddy has had a hard day at work.'

But in Thatcher's stiflingly 'normal' family with its pantomime dreams of City Banquets and its desires for a nice house with flowery sofas, was a contradiction. This was the ideal family with everything as it should be (and this is the idealised family she peddles in her politics), but *she* didn't want it. First she pursued a career but, more importantly, she described having her twins in the language of panic.

She looked at her tiny (presumably premature) babies and, in her own words, thought, 'Now, if I'm not careful I'll never make the effort to get back to...intellectual pursuits. I'm just going to be *so* overcome with this that I'm not going to continue with the law or politics or anything.' She sent off her application for the bar exams from hospital.

Such thoughts are hardly unfamiliar; they were the staple of early '70s professional feminism. But they hardly fit the great champion of the conservative, not to say Victorian family. Surely if her family was so ideal she'd have been happy to repeat the experience instead of panicking at losing her identity?

Psychoanalysis can be helpful for understanding such unresolved contradictions. 'Vot we have here', as Freud might have said, is a woman who has had to idealise to cover her own sense of disappointment and rejection. Perhaps she felt let down by her anally-obsessive parents (she went on and on about how clean they were). Perhaps her father's relentless discourse of 'stand on your own two feet' was not after all a great substitute for love. Perhaps her mother's uneducated complicity in this was enough to make her reject everything her mother had been, or indeed perhaps she suspected that her father actually despised the 'little woman' and would only desire the educated daughter.

Mrs Thatcher's venture into the intimate revelations of the home may misfire. Under the armour we have glimpsed not the promised heart but the raging child, who cannot admit her disappointment in her father (and so idealises him) and who turns her bitterness and hostility towards the rest of the world. Perhaps we have glimpsed the foundations of a politics built on 'Daddy wouldn't give it to me, so no one can have it'.

Rosalind Coward

C. H. ROLPH

As I Was Saying

A selection of C.H. Rolph's articles, spanning the past fifty years. They come from the New Statesman, The Listener, Punch, The Spectator, Observer Magazine, Police Review, Radio Times, The Guardian, New Law Journal etc.

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A COUNTRY OFF BALANCE

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, and one of the richest in resources. Why does it live down to Third World clichés of corruption, incompetence and authoritarianism? Well, last month it celebrated the 25th anniversary of independence — bringing home the fact that Nigeria's rulers, all old men in a country that respects age, are 'warped by the colonial experience' before 1960. ADEWALE MAJA-PEARCE exults in the triumph of one 16-year-old footballer

Camera Press

DURING MY RECENT VISIT to Nigeria the national under-17 football team won the junior World Cup by beating Germany 2-1. The country went wild. On their return each player was presented with a colour television set and the guarantee of free education up to and including university level. The idea was even mooted that their day of victory should be celebrated annually as a public holiday.

I am not a lover of football. My first inclination was to view it all as rather excessive, until it occured to me that to do so would have been to miss an important connection. It happened that the country was on the point of celebrating the 25th anniversary of independence. The two events were linked.

Twenty-five years is not a long time. The chronic instability of a country which appears to have all the elements of greatness — size, population, resources, energy — is something that has continually baffled observers both within and without, both those who want to see Nigeria take its rightful place in world affairs, and those who rub their hands at each sign that this will never come about. I do not want here to rake over the well-worn ground of colonialism, but it seems inescapable to me that the colonial experience must be held accountable for the present mess. If you have, on the one hand, a geographical entity with vast potential and, on the other, a populace denied a say in the running of it, an attitude of irresponsibility is the only possible outcome.

It has taken 25 years for the process of psychological decolonisation to become a reality, allowing the kind of confidence that is the beginning of greatness to assert itself. Let us return to that football match for a moment. At half-time the scores were level at one-all. As the second half unfolded it began to seem as though the match would continue into extra time.

Then a miracle happened. It is the only way to describe it. One of the Nigerian forwards found himself in possession of the ball within striking distance of the German goalmouth. But he was not properly balanced. At that point he could have kicked out wildly and hoped for the best. He did something else. He held on to the ball long enough to regain his balance, confronted and evaded two defenders, and then slammed the ball home. At that moment, as my friends around me went completely berserk, I caught a glimpse of the future. It was encapsulated in that young man on a field in far-away China, and it was pure confidence.

His youth, of course, was everything, and I don't mean that in the obvious sense. To be his age in Nigeria means to have been born into an already independent state: he is not troubled by the sneaking suspicion of his own possible inferiority.

WELL, AM I NOT GUILTY of reading too much — only a football match, after all! — into an insignificant event? Doesn't it go against all the facts, 'the facts' being the daily accumulation of evidence that Nigeria simply doesn't work? True, there are constant power failures, a continuous shortage of running water even in the rainy season, an inefficient mail system and an unreliable telephone service; policemen are rude and often brutal, officials rarely know their jobs, and the roads are in an appalling state of disrepair. Despite its huge reservoirs of oil the country is in debt, the hospitals are out of essential drugs and there is a shortage of everything from food to motor cars. To cap it all there was a coup while I was there, as if to underline the point.* But to say all this is to say nothing

**Army Chief of staff Ibrahim Babangida ousted Muhammudu Buhari on 27 August 1985.*

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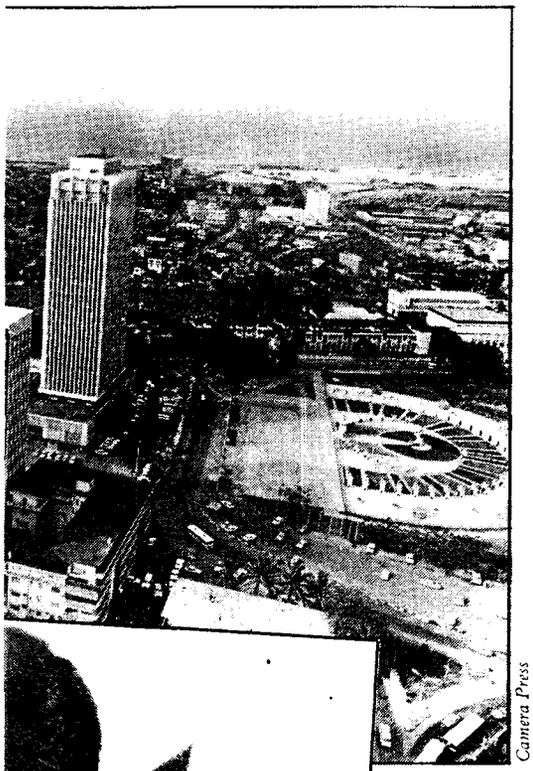
'The chronic instability of a country which appears to have all the elements of greatness — size, population, resources, energy — is something that has continually baffled observers.' (Below) Lagos from the air



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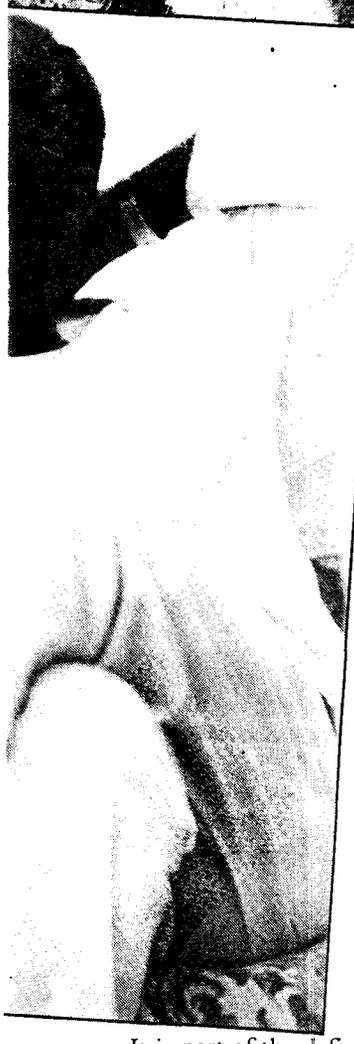

Chief Obafemi Awolowo: 'That was my grand strategy . . . to launch a five-year plan for myself. In that time I was going to make all the money that is possible for a man of my brains and brawn to make in Nigeria. After getting this . . . I should like to make more money.'

new. It is part of the definition of the so-called 'Third World'. While it is true that one sees all these things, it is also true that one is conditioned to see them.

What we don't see are the more nebulous but equally important signs that profound changes are taking place. An isolated moment on a sporting field hardly qualifies as a self-respecting fact in the pages of a newspaper. But it is a fact, and a no less important one. It must be taken into account in any analysis if we are to hope to get anywhere near the truth.

Meanwhile, we are left with the depressing reality that political power is still in the hands of an older generation of men — notice the complete absence of women in the new regime — whose sense of their own dignity has been warped by the colonial experience. It is at the root of their irresponsibility. How else is one to account for the massive levels of corruption which turns mediocrities into multi-millionaires overnight merely because their brother-in-law happens to be minister of something-or-other? Social anthropologists make a lot of noise — and money — by pretending this has to do with 'traditional' African family ties or, when this clearly won't do, tribal obligations.

But one need look no further than the Lagos policeman who cannot refrain from beating senseless a perfectly innocent citizen over a matter that could have been settled with the minimum of fuss. Such a man is simply unsure of his authority, and so must prove it to himself and everyone else in the only way his limited imagination can dimly perceive. So it is with our political leaders, who behave in ways just as brutish, and who, since the first day of independence, have been busy turning the country into a place where human life has become increasingly cheap.

This was how a friend of mine summed it up when we discussed the latest coup:

> I love my country. I don't mind suffering along with everybody else if it means that in the end we'll make a success of it. But I know what will happen. I will be suffering and others will be eating, and at the end of the day I would have put the welfare of my family in jeopardy for nothing. Well, I'm not a fool. I haven't seen the person yet who talks as if he has the best interests of the nation at heart, and until I do I'll take care of number one.

His attitude was repeated again and again by people I spoke to: bright young professionals living and working in Lagos and having a hard time making ends meet. Turning to the latest coup my friend merely shrugged his shoulders and said: 'If you hear that two top-ranking soldiers are arguing, you can be sure it's about chopping.' To 'chop' means to eat, both literally and metaphorically; in other words, one of them is unhappy about the division of the spoils.

TO CALL such an attitude cynical is to miss the point: it is merely realistic. He, too, has read the autobiographies of Nigeria's 'founding fathers', the ones who began it all and who, pushing 80, are still hungry for more of the action. Here is Nnamdi Azikiwe, the country's first President, quoting from an entry in his diary for 1933:

> First, that, henceforth, I shall dedicate my life to the emancipation of the continent of Africa from the shackles of imperialism, and to the redemption of my country from the manacles of foreign rule.
> Secondly, that in order to earn an honest livelihood, henceforth, I shall devote my energies either to work on my own or to work for others, with the sole aim of accumulating wealth...
> Third, that, henceforth, I shall utilise my earned income to secure my enjoyment of a high standard of living...

And here is Chief Obafemi Awolowo, first leader of the Opposition, recalling the plan he set for himself as a young man:

> If by the time I was 40 years old, I had not acquired the requisite funds to proceed to the UK to study law, I would settle permanently to a business career. That was my grand strategy, and the tactic I adopted was to launch a five-year plan for myself beginning with 6 March 1943, my 34th birthday... In that time I was going 'to make myself formidable intellectually', 'morally invulnerable', 'to make all the money that is possible for a man of my brains and brawn to make in Nigeria', and 'to acquire a profession'. 'After getting this profession,' I added, and as it turned out, prophetically, 'I should like to make more money. That may take another five years. Then I shall start a new offensive'.

Any wonder, then, that things didn't turn out as one might have reasonably hoped; that, after 25 years, Nigeria still finds itself dependent on events elsewhere and over which it has no control?

Undoubtedly part of the problem is that Nigeria is still very much a society in which age is respected for its own sake. While this means, on the one hand, that old people aren't simply shunted off to homes as soon as they become a burden on the family, it also means that youthful ambition and energy and talent is continually thwarted. This is an aspect of 'traditional' society that anthropologists might usefully spend more time examining. That same friend of mine, a young lawyer with a thriving private practice, was once berated by an older colleague for daring to argue wth him in court, thereby not giving him the respect due to age! Of course my friend refused to be intimidated and told him to go to hell in no uncertain terms, but it is an indication of the kind of mentality that prevails and which is killing the country. Anything goes, as long as you are old enough to get away with it.

So where does this leave our young footballers? Is all that confidence to be squandered? □

Adewale Maja-Pearce grew up in Nigeria and now lives in Britain. A book of his short stories, Loyalties, *is to be published next autumn by Longman.*

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Legends or lives

David Lancaster

The Other Side of the Moon
SHERIDAN MORLEY *Weidenfeld* £10.95
Blessings in Disguise
ALEC GUINNESS *Hamish Hamilton* £9.95
Orson Welles
BARBARA LEAMING *Weidenfeld* £14.95

HOW AND WHY do people become 'celebrities'? Perhaps the answer is simply to have a good agent; but the process is still a mystery. Today, it seems that anyone can be a celebrity, irrespective of the extent or the value of their achievements.

Sheridan Morley's biography of David Niven, **The Other Side of the Moon**, is an interesting example of this. Niven was a charming, competent, second-league Hollywood actor whose career was almost uniformly mediocre. Yet, in his last years, after the publication of his best-selling memoirs, he was treated as one of the gods. One remembers him on television, wandering through a mansion and advertising Maxwell House. But there was no reason for this. His reputation and his talent were totally separate issues. In fact, it is a tribute to Morley's skill as a journalist that he has written such a diverting book out of such undistinguished material. The biography is a nostalgic evocation of a more civilised Hollywood, a celebration of an Englishness that existed only in American movies. Morley also shows how Niven's Hollywood was just an extension of his life at Stowe and in the army; if you were charming, handsome and cheeky, you could enjoy a very nice career without having to work too hard. It was a game and Niven knew the rules backwards. He had a steady talent for self-promotion; he made sure he was friends with all the right people; he assiduously courted celebrities and then dropped them when it was convenient. At the same time, he was loyal to close friends and physically and morally courageous. *The Other Side of the Moon* isn't very interested in analysing these contradictions, but it offers useful insights into the old studio system and will be pleasant reading for late-night movie addicts.

Sir Alec Guinness's autobiography, **Blessings in Disguise**, would be a notable book even if it hadn't been written by such a famous actor. For he has a real talent for writing: he isn't part of the usual gosh-and-gush school, but is a cool, ironic stylist who reveals his personality more through his omissions than through what he actually says. 'The result,' he writes, 'is not so much a patch-work quilt of memoirs as a cat's-cradle of reminiscences, all tangled round myself.' He tells of his nomadic, illegitimate childhood, his war-time service in the navy and of his conversion to Catholicism, ending with a meditation on the identity of his father which, like so much of his life, is provisional and inconclusive. Looking at the illustrations, it is tempting to see his face as an anonymous mask waiting for its identity, for some piece in an obscure puzzle to click into place. As a performer, he is a master chameleon — and this is a chameleon's life.

Camera Press

Already some kind of legend: Welles in Paris in 1952

It is also highly entertaining, with unusual portraits of people one had thought had been done to death. There is a picture of Edith Evans in her dotage; of Martita Hunt giving young Alec acting lessons; and of Sir Ralph Richardson staggering into the London night and being rude to passers-by. Guinness is an acute observer, a sceptic who views his life as an exploration: 'for me, the great adventure could be yet to come.' One hopes that, before it does, he will write another book as good as this.

Sadly, for Orson Welles, the great adventure has already started — and all we are left with are the films and the enigma of the man. It is typical, somehow, that he should have died just a few days after the publication of a major

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biography by Barbara Leaming. Charles Foster Kane would have approved of such diversionary tactics.

Leaming enjoyed a very close relationship with her subject. In fact, her structure — objective narrative linked by personal vignettes — was suggested by Welles himself; one can feel his subversive presence, scotching any attempt to pin him down. **Orson Welles** reads like the most extravagant fiction, the great American novel no one bothered to write. Once again, Leaming tells of the child prodigy who was a theatrical giant at 23, a great film director at 25 and who contemplated running for president. She also chronicles the dramatic fall; the Hollywood treachery, the alienation, the exile in Europe. It is a tragedy in two acts with this book as the epilogue. Yet Welles lived his life as though the tragedy didn't exist. Although bitterness occasionally appears, the overwhelming impression is of enthusiasm, whether for some doomed film project or for a TV commercial. Perhaps that was his secret in the end. He never lost the naive wonder of childhood.

Welles enthusiasts will enjoy this book because it meticulously charts his life and is not afraid to lay some of the blame at his own door. In middle age he admitted to never having any discipline and, indeed, his life reads like the story of a catherine wheel firing off in all directions. Heaven knows when he ever managed to sleep. He was simultaneously writing, acting, hustling, chasing women, rushing to the steam baths to try and lose weight.

It is no wonder that he was stabbed in the back so often: it was all too frequently turned in the wrong direction. Leaming suggests that this frenetic activity was caused by Welles's need to live up to some prodigious reputation imposed on him by someone else. In childhood, it came from 'Dadda' Bernstein, his mother's lover and his first mentor; in Hollywood, from the executives who had heard of his theatrical achievements. He was hounded constantly by his doppelganger, 'Genius'. At one point Welles says to Leaming: 'you're talking about — alas — some kind of legend.' Like much in his life, that legend was ambiguous, the source of his failure and his greatness. □

Notes of native sons

Clive Davis

The Price of the Ticket: Collected Non-Fiction 1948-1985
JAMES BALDWIN *Michael Joseph* £14.95
Brothers and Keepers
JOHN EDGAR WIDEMAN *Allison & Busby* £9.95 & £4.95

JAMES BALDWIN carries a heavy burden. For the past 20-odd years, America's most famous black novelist has been obliged to put in overtime as his country's most famous black essayist, not to mention its most famous black political commentator — roles forced on him by the structure of American political and literary institutions. During a visit to London some months ago, he appeared on a cultivated TV chat show where the questioning revolved around his memories of the civil rights campaigns of the Sixties and where, no doubt for the thousandth time, he was asked to give his opinion on Whether Black Americans Have Made Any Real Progress and What Martin Luther King Was Really Like. There were, as far as I recollect, no questions about Baldwin's current work or his views on fiction in general. It would have been easy for idle viewers to have mistaken this slight, nervous man for a retired politician rather than a working writer.

The situation is, of course, partly of Baldwin's own making, if only because it is some six years since he published his last novel, *Just Above My Head*, a work which failed to allay suspicions that his best fiction had already been bound, printed and placed on the shelf. Baldwin has, in any case, always steered clear of being labelled as a novelist pure and simple, using his essays and journalism as a means of bolstering the civil rights movement. There is even a strong case for the argument that his prose style, with its dense semi-religious rhetoric, is better suited to the essay form than to fiction, more appropriate to the transmission of ideas than to characterisation. Future generations may well prefer *The Fire Next Time* to *Go Tell It On The Mountain*. The fact that such a choice arises is a testimony to Baldwin's versatility and energy.

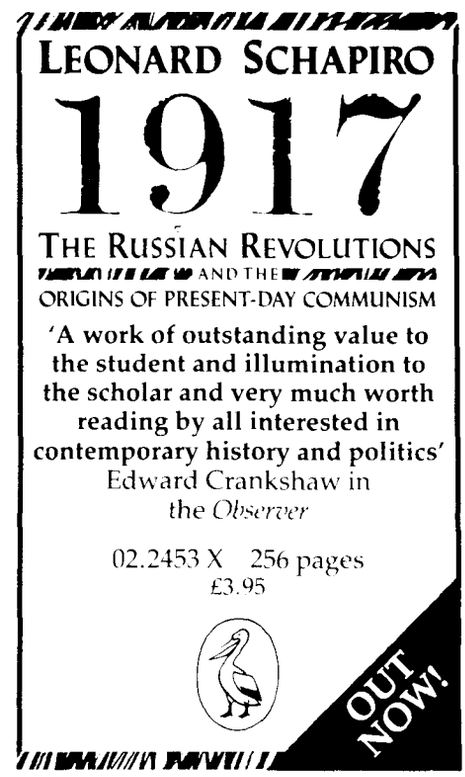
The Price of the Ticket contains, according to the blurb, every important piece of non-fiction that Baldwin has written. The sub-title is somewhat misleading, since for no apparent reason only one of the essays — a study of sexual stereotypes, published, incongruously enough, in *Playboy* — was written after 1980. Although some of the pieces venture into the realms of cinema or (obliquely) homosexuality, the overwhelming majority are devoted to the American people's long and agonising struggle to come to terms with the fact that blacks might just be human after all.

Baldwin is remarkably consistent about what he caustically describes as 'the very last white country the world will ever see'. In his earliest essay, an anatomy of Harlem, he is mildly condescending about some aspects of ghetto life but has a far lower opinion of what is to be found beyond its boundaries. 'The white man's world,' he says, 'intellectually, morally and spiritually, has the meaningless ring of a hollow drum and the odour of slow death.' A quarter of a century later, in what is for my money his most profound work, *No Name in the Street*, Baldwin sees nothing to persuade him to change his mind. If anything, his judgment is even more damning — 'as social and moral and political and sexual entities, white Americans are probably the sickest and certainly the most dangerous people, of any colour, to be found in the world today.'

The two quotations symbolise the strengths and weaknesses of this collection. Baldwin's analysis of American racism is eloquent and dignified. But read together, the essays tend to cancel themselves out, many of the shorter ones being, inevitably, reworkings of *The Fire Next Time* or *No Name in the Street*, with the same use of analogies with Nazi Germany and recollections about childhood events. I would gladly have exchanged a dozen of the minor articles for some of Baldwin's reflections on other themes — Europe or jazz, for instance, or the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Nevertheless, *The Price of the Ticket* still provides many memorable moments. Although there is immense passion in these pages, Baldwin seldom falls into the trap of making extravagant gestures. His has been a harsh life, yet he is still aware of his privileged position — he may be a nigger, but he is an affluent one. In *No Name. . .* he recalls buying a suit in 1968 to wear at a Carnegie Hall rally where he was to share the platform with Martin Luther King. Two weeks later he wore the same suit to King's funeral and afterwards casually remarked to a friend, a newspaper columnist, that he would never wear the outfit again. The comment duly appeared in print. Baldwin then received a message from an old school friend who was down on his luck. The man had read the column and wanted to know if he could have the suit:

> Now for me, that suit was drenched in the blood of all the crimes of my country. If I had said. . .somewhat melodramatically, no doubt, that I could never wear it again, I was, just the same, being honest. I simply could not put it on, or look at it, without thinking of Martin, and Martin's end, of what he had meant to me, and to so many. I could not put it on without a bleak,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pale, cold wonder about the future. I could not, in short, live with it, it was too heavy a garment. Yet — it was only a suit, worn, at most, three times. It was not a very expensive suit, but it was still more expensive than any my friend could buy. He could not afford to have suits in his closet which he didn't wear, he couldn't afford to throw suits away — he couldn't, in short, afford my elegant despair. Martin was dead, but *he* was living, he needed a suit, and — I was just his size. He invited me for dinner that evening, and I said that I would bring him the suit.

While Baldwin's non-fiction belongs to the mainstream of polemical writing, John Edgar Wideman's remarkable study of his relationship with his convict brother defies categorisation. To describe **Brothers and Keepers** as a cross between *Soledad Brother* and *In Cold Blood* would give some idea of its power but no sense of its lyricism or anguish.

Robby Wideman, now in his mid-thirties, has served ten years of a life sentence for murder. He and two friends, would-be drugs dealers, were found guilty of killing another petty criminal while trying to swindle him. Whether or not Robby pulled the trigger is merely a peripheral issue; what John Wideman is trying to do is discover why Robby is languishing inside Pittsburgh's penitentiary while he, John, leads a comfortable life as a Professor of English and award-winning novelist.

Naturally, there are no simple answers, beyond the fact that if you grow up in the black ghetto in Pittsburgh, or any American city, you have a fair chance of ending up as a criminal, while a lucky few will defy the law of gravity and move up the educational ladder. Robby sums it all up when he quotes: 'One child grows up to be somebody who just loves to learn. And the other child grows up to be somebody who just loves to burn.'

Until Robby's conviction, the two brothers could hardly have been described as close. But once they were separated by prison walls, the two men began to talk, John continually taking notes until he had gathered enough information to reconstruct Robby's descent into crime, in his own words. As he has already demonstrated in his Pittsburgh novels, Wideman is adept at transferring street language to the printed page. The result is that we are listening in on a private conversation, as if we were sitting next to the brothers in the noisy, crowded visiting room in the prison. The experience is uncomfortable at times. Wideman frankly analyses his own inadequacies, his guilt over his material success. Robby emerges as the more self-possessed of the pair, able to analyse his motives far more dispassionately than his brother:

> Straight people don't understand. I mean, they think dudes is after the things straight people got. It ain't that at all. People in the life ain't looking for no home and grass in the yard and shit like that. We the show people. The glamour people. Come on the set with the finest car, the finest woman, the finest vines. Hear people talking about you. Hear the bar get quiet when you walk in the door. Throw down a yard and tell everybody drink up. See. It's rep. It's glamour. That's what it's about. What else a dude gon do in this fucked-up world. You make something out of nothing. □

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FICTION

Makers of magic

Ben Okri

The Devil's Church and Other Stories
MACHADO DE ASSIS *Carcanet* £8.95
Learning to Swim and Other Stories
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Under the Banyan Tree
R.K. NARAYAN *Heinemann* £9.50
Oriental Tales
MARGUERITE YOURCENAR *Aidan Ellis* £8.95

IN *AS YOU LIKE IT* Shakespeare says: 'the wiser, the waywarder'. Machado De Assis exemplifies this in the short story form. Most of the 19 stories in **The Devil's Church** are in their first English translation. They were originally published between 1882-1905 yet read as though they had been written recently. This collection is an arsenal of fictional cutting edges: De Assis penetrates the essence of hypocrisy and sham. His talent for hoax is matched only by his passion for debunking. His prose is both acid and fragrant; he is extremely readable.

'Alexandrian tale', for example, is an idea taken to its unflinching conclusion. Strobius, a philosopher, has this amazing, almost pythagorean thesis that 'the gods placed the essence of all human capabilities in the animals of the earth, water, and air. The animals are the letters of the alphabet, and man is the syntax.' One strain of this thesis is that 'the blood of a rat, given to a man to drink, could turn him into a thief'. When the philosopher and his disciple arrive in Alexandria they test the idea on themselves and promptly become thieves. They wind up on the dissecting table of Ptolemy. In the title story the devil, dismayed with his own disorganisation, founds a church of his own. For a while humankind worship at his temple. Then, bit by bit, they turn back to the way of the good. The devil, dismayed even further, confronts God, who can find no better explanation for this than 'the eternal human contradiction'. This is a short story as epic. Machado De Assis is fully alive to the potential of fiction. Strange angles appeal to his cheeky genius: he is a social critic, fabulist, satirist and acerbic observer of social pretensions all rolled into one. Beside him many celebrated short story writers appear like timid and precious school children. Credit must be given to the publishers and translators (Jack Schmitt and Lorie Ishimatsu) for making available this father of Brazilian literature.

Graham Swift's **Learning to Swim** uses too many words. His stories are slack and his language often clotted. All but one are written in the first person and yet manage to be on the outside of their worlds. The first story is exasperatingly showy. The second is too long and unfocused. Swift seems to write short stories with the mind of a novelist.

He does, however, have a knack for bearing his reader on a rough paranoic wave: his stories

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are first-person nerve ends. His theme can be resolved into the terror of individual reality. What is difficult to understand is how, in the long rambling essay-story called 'The Watch', he can have this description of a woman giving birth: the baby emerged 'like something poured out from a pickle jar, a slithery brine accompanying it. There followed it, rapidly, an indescribable mass of multicoloured effluents, the texture of liquid corals, gelatine, stewed blackberries. . .From what a ragout is human life concocted.' And earlier on there is this bad sentence: '. . .What, in turn, was that pregnancy, pressing, even as we sat, into our puny backsides, but the pregnancy of Time?' The idea of the story is interesting — clocks cause time and contain demons — but the treatment is ghastly and full of perverse sentimentality.

Swift writes a fiction of unease; the ends of his stories hang between illumination and dread. While they can be strangely compulsive, they are all so similar. One unmistakable thing is that they are about moral cowards and spineless individuals collapsing within the insidious pressures of evaded responsibilities, evaded vision. Maybe these are the kind of stories an aspect of England deserves.

Narayan has the serenity of the experienced and more traditional story-teller. **Under The Banyan Tree** collects 28 of his stories, along with a warm introduction. Whether his stories are about the joke reality plays on an eccentric archeologist or a man who gets it into his head to tell nothing but the truth for one day and finds his life twisting into complications or about a child who endlessly dreams up schemes for earning a little extra pocket money, the predicament of Narayan's characters is always grounded in reality and always truthful. He depicts it without sentimentality and yet with much tenderness.

Narayan is also magical. He is as open to the fiction that can come from superstition as to that which can emerge from traditional religion. The so-called Third World is a mine for the generation of literature for the simple reason that the appalling conditions of survival, the incredible confluences and inequalities, fill the days with fictionality: the pressure of things yields the extra-ordinary. Narayan's clarity, his mastery of techique, his respect for the spectrum of human predicament, his absence of malice and his freedom from a single philosophy that explains everything away put him in the unique position of being able to turn a teeming cultural life into lucid and enjoyable stories.

Marguerite Yourcenar's **Oriental Tales** was published in France in 1938, has been revised since and is now in its first English translation. Drawn from diverse Eastern legends, her stories are of the fantastic. The legends are given flesh and patterned into a kind of realism. The stories are written from the lyricism of belief. With a lively historical mind, an exquisite style, a gentle touch and a feeling for the mystery of names, she draws the reader into spells of antiquity.

In 'How Wang-Fo was saved' an artist's work literally saves him from execution. With the delicacy of a Zen painting, Yourcenar depicts the artist who painted a sea and a boat in which he escapes with his disciple. In 'Kali Beheaded' the joining of the head of the goddess to the body of the prostitute wells up thrilling configurations. Marguerite Yourcenar's tales are about the disappearing art of enchantment. The translation (by Alberto Manguel) is praiseworthy and the book is elegantly bound and a joy to behold. □

Unknown, remembered

Geoff Dyer

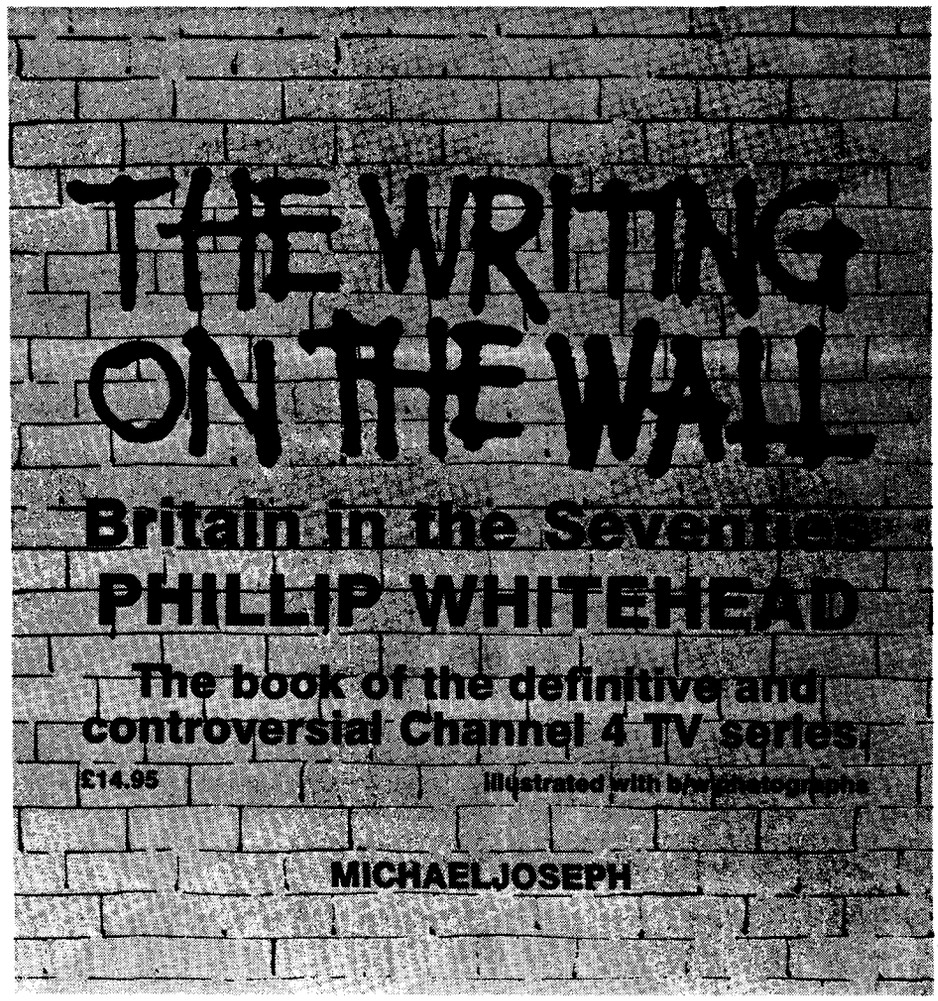
The White Bird
JOHN BERGER *Chatto/Tigerstripe* £10.95

THE WHITE BIRD has a dual function: to assemble Berger's best pieces since *About Looking* (principally the essays that were incorporated, in very different form, into *And Our Faces*) and to salvage some older essays which either have never been collected or need to be retrieved from previous collections that have lapsed from print. Selecting material for this 'Berger Reader', says editor Lloyd Spencer, was 'relatively simple' — but not entirely satisfactory. Obviously 'The Moment of Cubism' and essays on Goya and Bonnard deserve to be restored to print but the main effect of including pieces like 'The Eaters and the Eaten' (a comparison of bourgeois and peasant eating habits), 'The Storyteller' (virtually identical to the introduction to *Pig Earth*) and a number of other weak or inconsequential pieces is to remind us of the absence of more valuable pieces that are still unavailable.

Having said that, Lloyd Spencer's selection does enable us to see the full range of Berger's writing: poetry, travel pieces, essays on painters and more general enquiries into the nature of the aesthetic, exile and loss. This variety — plus the unevenness — of the contents makes it difficult to review generally without distorting particularly. I will concentrate on what *The White Bird* reveals as the essential characteristics of Berger's style and method. First a weak piece:

'On the Edge of a Foreign City' is a series of unlinked vignettes from a visit abroad; it combines detached but telling observation with detailed recording of events Berger happened to witness. The quality of felicitousness that is essential to the random anecdote — the discovered incident — is lost, though, because, to use Berger's own words against him, in every act of looking there is an expectation of meaning (like Lawrence in his pyjamas by the water trough, *waiting* for something interesting to happen). To write well like this you have to *appear* to write easily. Berger is too self-conscious a writer to manage it: the effort of writing is too palpably there.

Elsewhere this is his strength. His best essays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are marked by strain rather than ease. Thought for Berger is an almost physical effort: in the earlier essays there is a bunched muscularity to his prose, as if bracing itself for the work ahead. His style in these earlier essays is to combine emotive language and metaphor with the grammar of assertion: hence his commanding suggestiveness. His later writing bears the marks of difficulties overcome; all his best writing is marked by the labour of making words match the intensity of his gaze. He never compromises the fact of what he sees or feels for the sake of a slick phrase or verbal ingenuity. The basis of his method is an unswerving fidelity to the actual. He believes that if he stares long enough and hard enough he can penetrate the thickest shadows.

His best essays are answers in the form of investigations; they begin with his wrestling with uncertainties, fighting with himself, as he said of Watteau, to understand what he sees. The particular quality of this seeing (which is almost a metaphor for thinking in Berger's case) is important. Berger's reactions freeze the instantaneous 'shock' of seeing an image — or encountering a problem — for the first time. The subsequent process of familiarisation preserves that moment without diminishing its power, without dulling it. The 'raw' and the acquired, as it were, simultaneously co-exist and define each other more sharply. Hence his precision.

In the course of his investigative scrutiny Berger moves closer and closer to the image or problem that he is considering until his reactions merge into a re-creation of the artist's method of working, until the description of sensation becomes a theory of effect. Often his discoveries draw him back to that 'suspended' moment of simultaneous shock and familiarity. Problem and solution share a common location. This is why Berger's intuitive discoveries and leaps have about them the quality of simultaneously realising and recognising — a sudden remembering. For obvious examples see his essay on Monet and Impressionism or the closing paragraphs of 'The Moment of Cubism'. Together with a number of other pieces, they confirm what should not have been forgotten: that Berger is still one of the most important writers in the language. Not all the material collected in *The White Bird* is of this standard but, as he wrote 25 years ago: 'It is our qualities not our defects that separate us.' □

ART BOOKS

Words about pictures

John Spurling

'AFTER ALL, why else than for dialogue do something as hard and as odd as attempting to verbalise about pictures?' With that justification for a no-nonsense approach, Michael Baxandall concludes his intricate set of essays on three particular paintings. His own 'inferential criticism' may be, as he claims in **Patterns of Intention** (Yale, £12.50), 'conversable and democratic' compared to the 'clerkly apparatus' and 'mediaeval' entrenchment of much specialised art criticism, but it's tough reading for all that and arrives at its simpler conclusions by routes circuitous and learned enough to establish Professor Baxandall's own clerkly credentials.

Before inferring Picasso's intentions in painting his Cubist 'Portrait of Kahnweiler', we are required to study the building of the Forth Bridge; the explanation of Chardin's 'A Lady Taking Tea' rests on 18th-century optics and a culture imbued with 'Lockeanism'; and to come to a 'plain reading' of Piero's 'Baptism of Christ' we have first to dispose of the concept of *commensurazione* as well as some of the far-fetched iconographies proposed by earlier scholars. Baxandall's book is a demanding but stimulating reminder that our eyes are as much instruments of habit as the rest of us and that what we think we know and see needs constantly to be made 'strange' again.

Carlo Ginzburg, the author of **The Enigma of Piero** (Verso, £12.95), is introduced by Peter Burke as a 'detective' and a 'plain' historian, but his interpretation of 'The Baptism' is more elaborate than Baxandall's and, although his iconographical conjectures may be based more rigorously on historical sources than those of such old wizards of art history as Panofsky and Wind, the sources are still patchy enough to leave the 'case' wide open. Ginzburg is more convincing in his solution of the notoriously riddling 'Flagellation', but perhaps because he remains so strictly archaeological and makes little attempt to animate the character of Piero himself — to do that, of course, he would have to grapple with the slippery nature of the painting itself rather than simply its subject-matter — the book is narrower in scope than its title implies and ultimately disappointing.

Gary Schwartz's **Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings** (Viking, £20) is a splendid compendium which attempts, perhaps for the first time, really to look at the character and *oeuvre* of the master without excessive reverence. Some may see it as a knocking exercise and certainly Rembrandt emerges as distinctly human (which is to say self-aggrandising, mean, foolish and corrupt) in his dealings with money and with other people. Schwartz, however, is concerned only to correct the distortion that afflicts the work both of Rembrandt and of his gifted contemporaries in our eyes. Because Rembrandt has been raised on to a pedestal and given semi-divine status as 'a sensitive human being with great spiritual depths', all the work must be judged likewise and, in a circular progression, the man then raised again on the strength of the work. But, as Schwartz shrewdly observes, 'once a painting is degraded from the status of a genuine Rembrandt, the visual, aesthetic and spiritual qualities observed in it until then cease to exist'.

So he sets out to look at it all again, the paintings (every accessible one), the documents, what is known of the life and the social background. Why, for instance, was Rembrandt comparatively unsuccessful beside such contemporaries as Govert Flinck and Jan Lievens? Schwartz's answer lies partly in Rembrandt's character, but also in his relationship to the peculiar social hierarchy, with its complicated religious and political groupings, that ruled and divided the 17th-century Netherlands.

Every painting is illustrated in colour (albeit somewhat indifferently) and separately discussed and the text snakes through and round a busy layout of graphs, genealogical tables, town-plans, documents and contemporary writings in translation. The thing almost resembles one of those Denis Wheatley do-it-yourself detective stories with attached exhibits and it is written in a breezy conversational style calculated to irritate pedants. It's true that at the end of it all, Rembrandt remains a dimly lit character, whose many-layered self-portraits seem if anything more impenetrable than ever in the light of, say, his treatment of his son's nursemaid and his own mistress, Geertge Dircx, who after she had brought a suit for breach of promise against Rembrandt, was, with her brother's connivance, shut in a house of correction for 12 years. Nevertheless, Schwartz's enthusiasm for looking at and thinking about the paintings and their maker afresh is infectious and it's not surprising that the book is already a best-seller in Holland.

Bruce Bernard treats Van Gogh in an even more reverential manner than usual, confining himself to a brief introduction and summary of the life and otherwise arranging extracts from the letters and large colour plates of the work in chronological order, so as to leave painter and public alone together. **Vincent by Himself** (Orbis, £25) is not expensive considering the quality of its illustrations and tells its well-

CLAUDE SIMON *Nobel Prize 1985*

The distinction that has fallen on one of France's most eminent literary figures surprised the pundits, but not us. Simon's *The Flanders Road*, his best-known novel, is just out as a trade paperback (£5.95), a brilliant recreation of a wartime incident when the French cavalry are ambushed and a sequence of events, memories and causations highlight the ambush in a different light. One of the key post-war literary events.

WILLIAM BURROUGHS

has never been so revealing as in *The Adding Machine* (£10.95), a fascinating collection of essays, reminiscences, articles and lectures that reveal the controversial American novelist as seer, humourist and wicked scourge of pretensions, hypocrisies and bigotism. Also recently published: a new edition of Jorge Luis Borges' most famous collection of stories and fables, *Fictions* (£3.95), marvellous metaphors of the human condition. *The New Photography* by Frank Webster is a sociological view of the problems of interpreting photographs, in the press, advertising and in film (£4.95).

HOWARD BARKER *Italia Prize 1985*

Winner of the *Prix Italia* for *Scenes from an Execution*, published in one volume with *The Castle* (£4.95), biggest hit of the successful RSC Barker season at the Barbican, which includes *Downchild* (in one volume with *Passion in Six Days*, £4.95) and *Crimes in Hot Countries* (together with *Fair Slaughter* £4.95). Howard Barker has emerged as one of the major modern playwrights, a deeply moral polemicist, castigating the evils of our time. His poems *Don't Exaggerate* (£3.95) have the same qualities.

FEMINIST NOVELS

Hélène Cixous, France's best-known feminist, has in her novel *Angst* (£4.95) explored a woman's inner psyche, her view of herself, her sexuality, her needs, with a thorough and penetrating self-analysis that is frightening and illuminating. A book in which every woman will make self-discoveries. *Love is a Solitary Game* by Esther Tusquets (£4.95) shocked macho Spain with its liberated heroine who teaches the intricacies of sex to a young poet. Two reprints from Marguerite Duras: *The Sailor from Gibraltar* (£5.95) and *The Little Horses of Tarquinia* (£4.95) are sensitive love stories with the Duras twist.

JOHN CALDER * 18 Brewer Street * London W1R 4AS

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known story to powerful effect. On the other hand, lacking the element of critical dialogue, it threatens almost to become synthetic art for the passive consumer, eliminating any sense of the original paintings.

The Bayeux Tapestry (Thames & Hudson, £38), a complete reproduction in colour and something over half the actual size, is another bargain blockbuster that almost makes the original redundant. Indeed, with its very full introduction, description and commentary by the BM's director, David M. Wilson, it virtually wraps up the subject; except that certain small points, such as the meaning of the naked people in the border and the question of who made it and where, remain obstinately obscure.

The complete catalogue of the **Crafts Council**'s collection (Crafts Council, £16.95) was not ready in time for the exhibition earlier this year. It raises, as the exhibition did, the usual questions about where craft stops and art begins, whether people want useful and traditionally beautiful pots, jewellery, textiles, etc. or just objects to exhibit around their homes or persons which might as well aspire to being sculpture or fantasy. Personally, I find most of the useless and aspiring things also the least imaginative and decorative and would happily lose or nudge off a table about half the collection. The other half, paradoxically — sturdy wood-baskets, fire-grates, bowls, tea-sets, rugs, chess-sets, etc. — seems wasted by being kept only for show like this, instead of used and enjoyed in the home. □

Left: Portrait of his father by Vincent Van Gogh

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A history of inflation

Michael Hofmann

The Collected Letters of Dylan Thomas
ed. PAUL FERRIS *Dent* £20

THIS ENORMOUS and improbably handsome volume carries the silver stamp of a 'Poetry Book Society Special Commendation', but it might just as well have been a Government Health Warning. It is a depressing book, full of waste and (enforced) deceit. Few of these letters can have brought much joy to their recipients: they are pleas for advances or loans, protestations (too much) to his wife Caitlin from his foreign trips, apologies to friends, a kind of virtuoso wheedling. Still, some of the writing is brilliant (often in an unpleasant cause), and the collection has been lovingly (and not at all uncritically) put together by his biographer, Paul Ferris.

After a long early section, full of the vehemence, opinionatedness and preachiness of the autodidact and schoolmaster's son (with views on punctuation), the letters move on to Thomas's life as a professional writer and — he married at 22 — a husband and father. They are almost entirely concerned with money, to the extent that they could be read as a history of inflation: a few shillings for an early poem, an advance of 20 dollars for a book of poems and later the bandying about of hundreds of guineas in negotiations with whole batteries of BBC producers after the War, with the film industry and finally the lucrative American circuit. Nonetheless, his life remained one of 'poverty with distinction, but never with dignity'.

Despite the number of sources of income open to him, his sudden success after the War and the number and the loyalty of his patronnesses and other contacts, he seems to have been always in debt. The formula responsible for this is outlined in these sentences to one editor: 'I can let you have one longish and very good poem, unprinted, for an immediate guinea. It is this week's masterpiece, it took two months to write, and I want to drink it.' Small wonder he ran out of time, money poems and drink. And yet, he had around him professional people who were absolutely dedicated to him and gave him every opportunity for a stable, productive existence: he had one publisher in England and one in America, Dent and New Directions; agents, likewise; the anthologist Oscar Williams sold his poems, stories and manuscripts in the States; his reading tours were organised by J.M. Brinnin. And, furthermore, he was constantly lining up these people in such a way as to bypass them, and go behind their backs. One scheme, by which friends would pay money into his account every week, he called 'Thomas Flotation Limited'; the 'limited' was his little joke, because there was no end of it.

Thomas was miserable away from Wales, but he wasn't a country man either, rather a suburbanite standing for 'the aspidistra, the provincial drive, the morning café, the evening pub'. The way he writes about poetry corresponds to this; he bad-mouthed most of his contemporaries and mocked the great ones, Pound and 'Pope' Eliot. He read no other literatures, not even Welsh. Textual criticism of his own work or that of friends shows an extremely narrow focus, rarely going beyond one or two words, and then not for their meaning but for 'sound and shape and colour'. In an early letter, he says, 'I'm a freak user of words, not a poet' and his critical procedure bears this out. In the best of these letters, he develops some sarky wit and fire:

> By this long time you will have, if not forgotten me — who *could* forget that lordly, austere grace and grave demeanour, the soberly matured wisdom, delicate, reverend, chaste and aloof, that incorruptible ascetic, that Santayana of Wales? — at least have come most justly to loathe the very hiccup of my name.

Too often, though, he is posturing, lachrymose, deceitful, fawning, grinding out phrases for a donation, writing 'on bent knees, wagging my bum like a spaniel'. It is sad to read these many letters, most of which only served to prolong his life which remained short. □

FICTION

In a strange land

Glyn Hughes

Home Truths: Sixteen Stories
MAVIS GALLANT *Cape* £9.95
Mum & Mr Armitage: Selected Stories
BERYL BAINBRIDGE *Duckworth* £7.95
Davies
DAVID CONSTANTINE *Bloodaxe Books* £7.95
The Discus Throwers
TOM WAKEFIELD *GMP* £3.95
Easy Stages
PETER ROBINS *GMP* £3.95

MAVIS GALLANT'S sensibility is one which seems to cast that of many other authors into a shadow; into a place from which they do not see clearly, or deeply, or richly enough. Her perceptions are keen and so thickly distributed that they make the textures of many other writers' work look meagre. This is not because of any excessive compression or colouring; her writing is relaxed and not ornate. It is because it is rich in perceptions; because she understands and controls so well the many things that are going on in the lives, or the under-lives, of her characters.

Home Truths is a partly ironic title, for the subject is either exile or home seen after long absence. It is anything but a 'homely' book. It is presented in three sections which emphasise the places and particular circumstances of the stories. The first setting is Canada, largely from a child's point of view, some time ago, in fact corresponding roughly with the author's childhood there. The second group of four

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stories, 'Canadians Abroad', corresponds in time and place with Mavis Gallant's own exile. The third setting is Montreal, where a young woman is growing up. This autobiographical undercurrent gives power, conviction and poignancy to the stories, without bringing arbitrariness to the plots. But it is in the sense of placing that the stories are weakest; in the sense of a particular place, culture and history. The characters are universal ones, but it would not be at the expense of this to give us a more palpable Montreal or Paris.

The real locale of Mavis Gallant's stories, though, is the edge of an abyss. When the writing is most dazzling, when inter-reaction among the characters is most powerful, they are tottering on the edge of something fearful. One reason why this chasm of the pysche is frightening is because it feels familiar — it feels, but we are never sure of it, and it is more disturbing because the geography is not quite specified.

Sometimes her technique of pushing the story forward with leaping perceptions is a cliché of the form, as so often in modern stories; a substitute for the true dynamics of plot. Sometimes the stories are pulled back too easily from the abyss, as if to remind us that *New Yorker* stories (all but one in this collection was first published there) are ultimately reassuring. Setting aside these reservations, this is a marvellous collection, one to read over and over again, like poems.

Beryl Bainbridge is another whose sensibility is in exile. Because of it she picks, with a nervous or apprehensive line, at what is most disturbing in the apparently normal, actually very strange, world. The back cover of **Mum & Mr Armitage** shows an out-of-date publicity photograph of Beryl Bainbridge in the pose of a pert, inquisitive, humorous, challenging school-girl, and this is entirely appropriate to her stories. Adults are observed from a distance of adolescent naivety. Several are written openly from this viewpoint; 'Somewhere More Central', for example, in which a girl, one very like the person depicted on the cover, goes, wry and out of touch, to her grandmother's funeral.

She is out of touch with the quaint mores of adults, rather than with true reality. It is the gap between custom-encased adulthood and observant youth that makes the stories entertaining and whimsical. 'She was the daughter of such a sensible, truthful, pessimistic woman — pessimistic in the way women become when they settle for what exists' writes Mavis Gallant in 'Voices Lost In Snow'; perhaps women, and men too, as often pose as whimsical and naive when they 'settle for what exists'. Beryl Bainbridge's stories are haunted with truthful things, while whimsicality and nostalgia sprinkle them like sanctifying rose-water; and if they are less psychologically dense than Mavis Gallant's, they are very entertaining.

David Constantine's **Davies** comes from Bloodaxe Books, in a thankfully expanding list from a publisher outside London. It is a first novel by someone who well knows what he is doing. It is not much longer than a short story, and not dissimilar in form, in that it evades multiplicity of levels. The story of Davies, petty criminal and vagrant who spent half-a-century in prisons, is cleverly told through three witnesses. It is a historical novel which relies upon newspaper evidence (Davies's case was raised in the House of Commons in 1911), but the interpretation is forbiddingly under the influence of Samuel Beckett, which leads to some portentous nonsense. 'But under what Monarch, who would say, or in what season of the year, but more than very seldom, by the grace of God' (and several worse, but too long to quote). More inspired than this, the sad character of Davies is made steadily more real and sympathetic as he is unfolded as child of nature, as an innocent treated atrociously by churchmen, and even as a metaphor for the poet and the poet's life.

Tom Wakefield's **The Discus Throwers** comes in format with another gay novel from GMP, but is the better one. (The other, Peter Robins's **Easy Stages,** is too world-weary, self-conscious, aware of its own sensitivity and amused by its own jokes to be enlightening.) If you assume from the opening pages of *The Discus Throwers* that the novel is predictable, then persevere and be surprised. Wakefield's downtrodden characters become rebels in unexpected and hilarious directions. The author's humanity encompasses the humiliations of the oppressed and suppressed without becoming maudlin, and any reader who has endured humiliation in school, either as pupil or teacher, will find his description of a long-service presentation hilarious. □

Ways of life

Nicci Gerrard

The Envoy from Mirror City
JANET FRAME *The Women's Press* £8.95
Singin' and Swingin' and Gettin' Merry Like Christmas
MAYA ANGELOU *Virago* £3.95
In My Own Name
SHARAN-JEET SHAN *The Women's Press* £3.95
Part of My Soul
WINNIE MANDELA *Penguin* £2.95

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IS an uncertain genre: describing the past by filtering it through a transforming present. Memory is a powerful but fluid force: selecting and distorting, shaping events through recollection. To 'tell the truth' about one's life is a fictional task — how can the 'self' ever be captured by the self?

New Zealand writer Janet Frame respects, and is enchanted by, the power of words. Her third volume of autobiography, **The Envoy from Mirror City,** is strung between memory and its metamorphosis. Language is the element in which she lives; what she calls her 'homeland' — 'Language may betray the writer, but the writer may not be the betrayer.'

Frame's two previous volumes of autobiography, *To the Is-Land* and *An Angel at my Table*, unearth painful experiences. In telling of her bewildered childhood, her inarticulate and agonisingly self-conscious adolescence and her subsequent incarceration in various mental hospitals, Frame wincingly

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translated by Ruth Hein
A rare first-hand account of Adolf Hitler by Otto Wagener, a member of the Nazi inner circle during its rise to power. £25.00

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indicts a society which could label a shy, ungainly young woman bearing a dazzling gift for words as 'insane' and cast her into a limbo land between life and death.

In *The Envoy from Mirror City* Janet Frame has left New Zealand and arrived in 1950s London. There is, finally, a sense of stepping out from nightmare into a world which, although still full of damp rooms, penury and embarrassing gaucherie, offers tentative resolutions. On her journey, Frame shivers in her garden-shed lodgings in Clapham, discovers the realities of magic-sounding place-names (Crystal Palace, Swiss Cottage, Shepherds Bush), meets pale poets in Soho, shakes off the label of 'schizophrenic' and travels to Ibiza where she finds love, failure and familiar loneliness: 'I was a vast empty palace awaiting the guests and the feast.'

Frame displays in this latest autobiography a talent for gleefully wry humour, as in her meeting with Sillitoe, whose conversation ranged from 'the servant problem to the au pair and back to the servant problem' or her first sexual experience in which she quoted from *Meeting and Mating* with a worldly air and stared in surreptitious amazement at 'this dovecot dressed in a condom'.

Frame is always the writer as outside-observer; shy watcher whose piercing eye and scrupulously pleasurable language come from knowing that 'the self must be the worker, the bearer of the burden, the chooser, place and polisher. *There must be the journey by* oneself. . .without stopping to think that one may become homeless in the world, and bankrupt, abandoned by the Envoy.'

Listening to Janet Frame's voice is a painful experience. The frail weft of words arranges itself around silence, absence and knowledge of continuing loss. Courage is trusting a language which 'betrays' and survival is the loneliest of 'homelands'. But listening to Maya Angelou's voice is like listening to the music that she sings, or joining in the slippery ecstatic steps that she dances. Maya Angelou does not just survive; she triumphs. Her capacity for joy in the face of disaster, for spitting in the face of despair, is almost frightening.

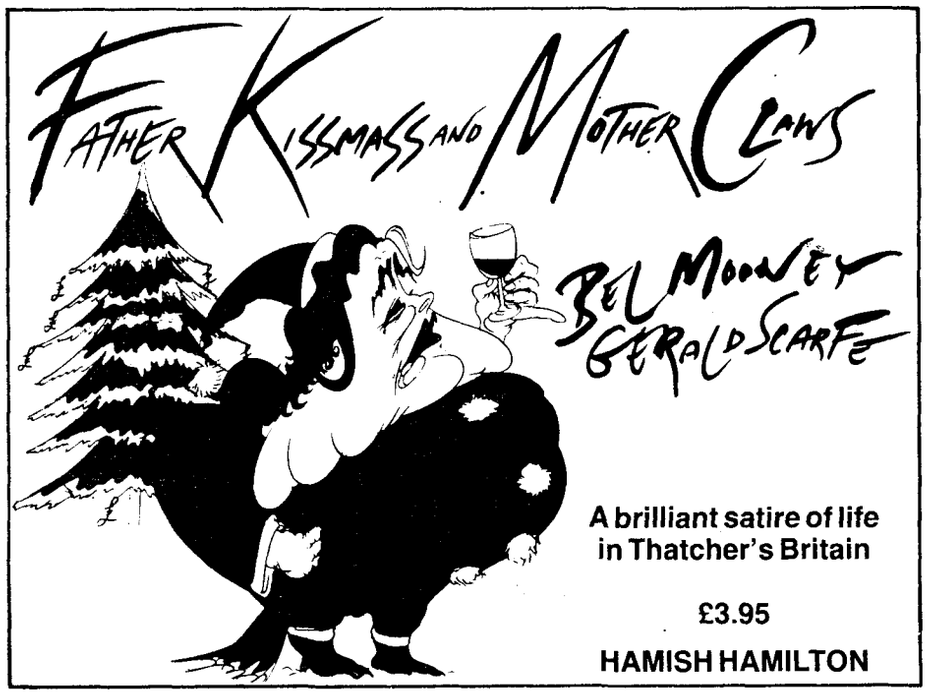
Singin' and Swingin' (and **Gettin' Merry Like Christmas**, but that is a bit of a mouthful) is her happiest book so far. The undaunted spirit which swung her over some ghastly ravines — raped as a child, mute for years, mother in her teens, manager of a brothel... — and which enchanted the readers of her two previous autobiographies, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and *Gather Together in my Name*, again manifests itself as a gutsy, unsentimental and humorous *love* for life's brutal beauties.

In *Singin' and Swingin'* Maya Angelou is working in a record store to support herself and her son. The book takes us through her difficult marriage to a white man, her entry into show business, her triumphant tour of Europe and North Africa with *Porgy and Bess*. In spite of disappointments, disillusions, moments of pain and bereavement, Angelou celebrates music, dance, travel, friendships and above all motherhood with self-mocking relish.

The danger of this book was that Angelou would be seduced by the jazz and blues of her words and glide across surface-success without peering into what it means to be a black woman, single mother. But neither Angelou nor her writing has been spoiled by success. Her honesty always prevails, slapping down her own rumbustiousness, alerting her to her failures. She is tough through every sinew of her language and life, but not armoured in a shell of desensitising self-protection. Angelou has remained aware of those who do not survive: her beloved brother in prison, her friends oppressed in their own country. The raunchy exuberance of her writing feeds off the music of her ancestors and the suffering of her people: 'I had a heritage nearer than the tongue which gives it voice. My mind resounded with the words and my blood raced to the rhythms.'

Both Angelou and Frame use their life as material for their art. Sharan-Jeet Shan, in telling her experiences, has an aim beyond recording the 'essence' of a life: 'If my book awakens in just one woman's heart that inside us all there lies a latent courage, a whole host of inner resources, then it will have served its purpose.' **In My Own Name** describes how Sharan-Jeet Shan, the daughter of a Sikh army officer who grew up in the Punjab, was forced — physically forced, starved and beaten — into an arranged marriage with a man she could not love. Deprived of her career as a doctor, she was taken to England where, alone in a strange culture and abused by her husband, she struggled to bring up her two sons. With her divorce, she finally severed links with the Asian community and with her past. While the story of Sharan-Jeet's suffering and determination chafes against the machinery of restriction and male law, *In My Own Name* refuses simply to condemn Indian customs and embrace Western values. To treat her life as something of value, Sharan-Jeet has to disengage herself from all communities and search only for 'an identity of my own'.

This certainly is not Winnie Mandela's purpose in telling her story. In **Part of my Soul** she 'speaks for my people', and her autobiography becomes a biography of South Africa. Winnie Mandela never questions her role as symbol of resistance, Mother of South Africa, wife of Nelson: her voice is de-personalised into her people's defiant shout against apartheid — 'Whatever they do to me, they do to the people of this country. I am and will always be only a political barometer.' As a clear indictment of apartheid and as a testimony of individual and collective courage, *Part of my Soul* speaks loud and bitterly. What is uncomfortable about this autobiography, however, is the way in which Winnie Mandela is a paradoxically passive figure — not choosing so much as accepting her symbolic power. Dignity, bravery, unflagging faith in her people even while she is cut off from them by the ban are curiously transformed into impersonal attributes. Winnie Mandela can write, even with pride, that 'I have ceased to exist as an individual'. Where Janet Frame, Maya Angelou or Sharan-Jeet Shan assert a difficult independence, Mandela must put away such claims; take them out, along with her crumbling wedding cake, only on the day of Nelson's release and her country's liberation. □



Typecast

Rupert Christiansen

The Letters of Ann Fleming
ed. MARK AMORY *Collins/Harvill* £16.50

IT IS NOT IMMEDIATELY easy to see why this book should be so interesting. Ann Fleming (1913-81) achieved nothing of public note. She was born privileged, into one of those classes that ramify chillingly through English upper-middle-class life, and never dropped caste. Her sufferings, however real, were of the common marital and parental lot. The blurb's description of her as 'last of the great political hostesses' is spurious — she befriended both

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Conservative and Labour politicians but she was no Madame de Stael and had no desire for power or influence. But interesting she is, and trivial this book is not.

As wife to Lord Rothermere of the *Daily Mail* she won herself a reputation for interfering with the editorial running of the paper ('the real boss wears a petticoat' reported *Time* in 1950), but her motives were not those of vaulting ambition. What she did cultivate was her talent for assembling and conducting social gatherings. She was, in every sense of the word, a mixer, who enjoyed 'stirring things up' between those of opposing views, introducing the dull to the brilliant, the politicians to the Bohemians, prompting, listening and delightedly observing her chemistry at work.

In 1952, after a long and intense romance, she married Ian Fleming and the letters of her troubled years with him dominate the book. This is in many ways a pity: her chief correspondent of the period was Evelyn Waugh and, while there is some pleasure to be had from watching her stand up to his bullying and bigotry — 'You *never* frightened me', she told him — without sinking to his level, the style is essentially that of clever banter and becomes tedious in bulk, revealing nothing of the real drama of the painful collapse of her relations with Fleming.

But the refusal to solicit pity was clearly characteristic — and perhaps the book's deepest fascination is that it gives a powerful portrait of a certain robust High Tory type. She was scarcely a fount of loving kindness ('none of us had any affection in our tempestuous childhood,' she wrote, 'and I have only seen its necessity very late'), but she was without prejudice or meanness of spirit. Her virtues were a feeling for 'the grand and splendid and strong' and a ruthless gimlet eye for the lifeless and pretentious. Thatcher, for instance, she records as '*totally* humourless, and with a nervous system usually attributed to fishes, surely she has never read a book or looked at a picture?'; while at the other end of the scale of amusement, she finds Noel Coward better as a cabaret act than as a guest 'because the deserts of pomposity between the oases of wit are too vast'.

Mark Amory's editing is pock-marked with small errors, variously misrepresenting a peer, a ballerina, a playwright and two novelists, but he makes an unfailingly lucid and entertaining guide. The fact that he has confessedly trimmed and polished the raw material may make Ann Fleming appear a better writer than she actually was, but the energy and sheer unillusioned intelligence of the woman are undoubtedly authentic and forcefully communicated. □

James Simmons

War on want

In these days of touch and go
you have more grandchildren than you suppose.
A thin shy boy in the *War on Want*
shop has the Simmons nose.
Wedged at his shabby granny's knee
he is shaking his head against her gross
mortifying flattery. 'Will ye not go
for a run to the Port with your granda?' Me!
'Will ye go to eat cake at the University?'

My son can hardly have been fourteen
when late one night I looked in
on his mountain eyrie. He was at the stage
of putting padlocks on the door. Walls glistened
with black paint. Blown-up grotesques
leered down from everywhere. I listened
for his breathing and heard breathing of two.
There was also asleep a blonde girl,
both fully dressed. How quickly they grew
up in those troubled times. I let her rest
and lifted him under my arm gently
easily, warm as toast. My one
desire was to hear nothing they had to say
so I bore him stealthily
to another bed in the same house
and tucked in, and kissed the head of, my son.

Until recently we were all able
to forget my first grandson
and we don't remember him often now.
I think grandly of making my will
if I ever hit the jackpot. I'll see
young whatshisname is comfortable.

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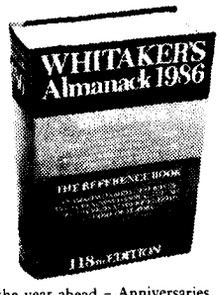

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IT'S ALL IN

WHITAKER'S Almanack 1986

Shorter reviews

Commonplace Book

E.M. FORSTER ed. PHILIP GARDNER
Scolar Press £25

In the second half of his life Forster gave up 'trying to be amusing' in novels. He began his *Commonplace Book* when he was 45 and continued it until two years before his death. In it he can be amusing without trying about growing old in the modern world, giving the same ironic scrutiny to the decline of civilisation as to the processes of his own physical decay. There is even an entry on his farts ('a chastening exercise in private stocktaking' comments the excellent editor Philip Gardner). Forster's quotations are as wide-ranging as one would expect but it is the accompanying jottings, anecdotes, incidents, doubts, dreams and jokes which afford greater insight into the man.

Forster's public image as serene spokesman for liberal humanism is so well-established that it is a shock to realise how transient he really was; living in a succession of rooms and dying in a semi-detached in Coventry whose past, like his own, had been destroyed. He periodically laments the decimation of trees and lanes, often after a vivid account of some walk. 'So I waddle on under a rucksack of traditional nature emotions trying to find something important in the English countryside.' A far cry from the Pan-haunted world of the early novels.

The presence in this book of the sharp edges of Forster's life — his homelessness, misogyny, doubts about his beliefs, feelings of idleness or ineffectuality — strengthens the overall power of his comic vision, especially about literature which, after friendship, mattered most to him: almost every page contains an animated vignette of some book or writer. My prize would go to a scene with Hardy at Max Gate with Forster trying to keep a straight face while he is grimly shown around the pet cemetery. 'But of course we have only buried those pets whose bodies were recovered. Many were never seen again.'

Alan Hurst

Orwell: The War Commentaries

ed. W.J. WEST *Duckworth/BBC* £14.95

This collection of radio scripts from 1942 and early 1943 will diminish rather than enhance Orwell's reputation. They show him deeply implicated in the British propaganda effort — not significantly more so than other writers like Day-Lewis or Dylan Thomas — but more than the picture of Orwell as the last honest man in Europe would have us believe.

Allowance should be made for what he knew at the time, particularly about RAF bombing of civilian targets. Nevertheless, it is unnerving to find Orwell proudly telling his Indian listeners about the increasing tonnage of bombs dropped on German cities and eulogising Stalin, Beaverbrook and Smuts. The seeds of *Nineteen Eighty Four*'s news bulletins, its global divisions and the novel's dehumanisation of suffering are certainly to be found here. Yet it is disquieting to learn that Orwell did not merely witness the mechanism of propaganda and the rewriting of history: he was a leading exponent of the process. What doubts he had about its truth and efficacy were confined to his diary. Finding himself defending British rule in India, which he did not support, Orwell's most frequent recourse was to the message that 'It's worse under fascism'. That was true, but not a complete vindication of the propaganda he was broadcasting.

The 49 weekly talks are not an accurate or particularly readable history of the war. Orwell minimised the many Allied reverses in 1942 by a repetitive insistence on long-term advantages. Details of the Far Eastern campaigns are distorted by exaggeration of Allied successes. His prose style is often redolent of Reuters and the Ministry of Information. The examples of Axis broadcasts given at the end of the book are interesting, especially Subhas Chandra Bose's attacks on British imperialism which, like Orwell's on fascism, have much to recommend them except their provenance.

Orwell's experience at the BBC was crucial to his refined vision of totalitarianism in *Nineteen Eighty Four*. Now that the compromises necessitated in that experience are becoming apparent, some of the superlatives bestowed on Orwell last year will have to be qualified.

Graham Field

Amritsar: Mrs Gandhi's Last Battle

MARK TULLY and SATISH JACOB *Cape* £10.95

Indira Gandhi was the second internationally known Indian leader to meet a violent end, the first being Mahatma (M.K.) Gandhi. But that is where the parallel between the two Gandhis stops. For, although a popular and influential personality, Mahatma Gandhi never exercised state power. Indira Gandhi, on the other hand, came into her own only after she had become prime minister.

The Mahatma was killed in January 1948 by a fanatical Hindu journalist who considered him to be too pro-Muslim — a victim of circumstances he did not create. Indira Gandhi was assassinated in October 1984 by a Sikh member of her own security guard for having ordered the storming of the Golden Temple complex, Sikhs' holiest shrine in Amritsar, in order to 'flush out' Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, the leader of fundamentalist Sikhs who had sought refuge in its fortified precincts. As it happens, she had earlier built Bhindranwale up for opportunistic reasons.

In 1977 Bhindranwale was a minor Sikh preacher. He was then chosen by Indira Gandhi's son, Sanjay, and his henchman in Punjab, Zail Singh, to outflank from the religious right the regional Sikh party, the Akali Dal, which had opposed Indira Gandhi's emergency of 1975-77 and which had won office in the 1977 elections. As starters, Bhindranwale and his followers were encouraged to attack Nirankaris, members of a heretical Sikh sect. Bhindranwale campaigned for Indira Gandhi's Congress Party in the 1980 elections, which returned the Congress to power in Delhi as well as Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab. With Zail Singh now home minister in Delhi, Bhindranwale literally got away with murder. Both Zail Singh and Indira Gandhi wanted Bhindranwale to show the Akali Dal to be less committed to the orthodox Sikh cause than him in order to undercut its popular support.

As one reads Mark Tully and Satish Jacob's lucid, well-documented and objective account of the events that culminated in Indira Gandhi's assassination, one sees the gradual making of a Frankenstein's monster destined to consume its creator. Like many insecure persons, Indira Gandhi craved power, total power. Though her party was in office in Delhi and most of the state capitals, she could not tolerate the non-Congress ministries that existed in several of India's 22 states. It was her demonic drive to topple these ministries and destroy the local opposition parties, by fair means or foul, that led her to do what she did in Punjab — in the process bringing about her violent death.

Dilip Hiro

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FILMS

Courting disaster

John Coleman

Rasputin (Alexei Petrenko) blows dandruff from aristocratic ringlets

Agony (PG)
Camden Plaza; Chelsea Cinema
When Father Was Away on Business (18)
Cannon Premiere
The Goonies (PG)
Warner West End
Santa Claus — The Movie (U)
Odeon, Leicester Square

ELEM KLIMOV's **Agony**, probably better translated as 'Death-throes', is a mess: 148 minutes of splintered cinema devoted to the ill-fated Romanovs and the part played by the unholy holy man Rasputin in their downfall. Old newsreels from 1904-17 have been pillaged for heavily ironic, sometimes horrific montage sequences; new characters in a bewilderingly deployed cast are introduced with their names and status inscribed on screen in Russian, these then blotted out by English transliterations and translations; the staged episodes themselves occasionally shift into monochrome where no fantasy is intended, without meaning.

How much this visual clumsiness is Klimov's fault one cannot judge, since his film — completed in 1974 or 1975 — was not shown in the Soviet Union till the Moscow Film Festival of 1981; bureaucracy alone knows if the original had meanwhile been tampered with. Certainly, on any reckoning, history has taken a beating, in that the enacted events have been scrunched up into one year: 1916. A narrator from time to time imparts information — the origins of the Romanov dynasty, a dossier on Rasputin's background and beginning — as well as doses of revolutionary platitudes.

Within this *borshch* or bosh a few flavoursome items are to be found. Alexei Petrenko's mad and massively bearish Rasputin, a creature of mythic appetites, muddled religiosity and red-eyed craftiness, lurches about the palace at Tsarskoe Selo with the Tsarina's confidante Anna Vyrubova (Alica Freindlikh) as his evil devotee. First seen cradling and crooning over the haemophiliac boy Tsarevich, he bestrides his random, surrealist occasions like a dishevelled colossus; violently embracing a baroness after a drunken party, later eccentrically rejecting her when she comes to his house as a sexual bribe for her husband's subsequent arrest; picking up coded advice (and abuse: 'You're a lewd hound, a hound, and you will perish like one') from the Buryat doctor of a weird clinic at a country estate; falling for erotic entrapment by hostile priests; winning back favour by curing the sick Tsarina; angrily hurling a pig on a courtyard dinner table during a boastful visit to his peasant wife and family in his home village of Pokrovskoe. He moves in a crowd of women, whorish and pious.

Of the rest, there are stirring scenes in the Duma, with an anti-Rasputin speech getting a standing ovation; the haggard excellence of Anatoly Romashin's weak Nicholas II, slaughtering rooks in a field as bad news comes from the generals; some telling newsreel fragments (the Bloody Sunday of 1905; recurring shots of priests blessing ranks of cannon-fodder). And, best of all, the pre-rehearsed killing of the 'rascal monk' — whose powers and motives remain a mystery throughout — when Prince Yusupov and his fellow-conspirators nearly (and near-comically) panic as a poisoned and shot Rasputin staggers outside, taking yet more bullets to see him off. This peculiar film has pretensions towards affording an historical tapestry: it resembles, rather, the craziest of quilts.

In 1981 the Yugoslav director Emir Kusturica won at Venice with *Do You Remember Dolly Bell?*. This year he took the top award at Cannes with **When Father Was Away on Business**, a pretty good entertainment about some awful events, but no masterpiece. Set in a Muslim community in Sarajevo in the 1950s, when Tito had broken with the Cominform, it negotiates much of its sad, bad, merry and rich material through the gaze of a podgy six-year-old, Malik (Moreno D'e Bartolli), who takes to sleepwalking when his womanising dad promises divorce to one conquest too many and she tells on him for not laughing at an anti-Stalin cartoon: dad's brother-in-law and local police chief sends him to a labour camp and marries the attractive sneak. Three years pass before the family is reunited, when grouchy grandpa (who resents baths) ups and leaves: 'I'm sick and tired of their politics. I'm too old for crap like that.'

Politics, in fact, figures incidentally: through the put-upon mother's suffering and anger, the brother-in-law's too-late remorse at a wedding feast, little Malik's mucking-up a speech to the mayor as he hands over a Pioneer's baton, a hesitancy about certain kinds of jokes. But ordinary (and extraordinary) human behaviour keeps thrusting through the amiable and black naturalness. The tell-tale tries to hang herself in a loo and succeeds only in flushing it. Malik falls in love with a doctor's fatally ill little daughter and manages to somnambulate into her bed. Against this innocence there is some

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

Dim Sun Hong Kong-born Wayne Wang's appealing mosaic portrait (with visual bows to Japanese master Ozu) of Chinese family in freshly observed San Francisco: widowed mother, unmarried daughter, cheery uncle. Touching, humorous, astringent, a young director's invitation to 'only connect'.

Prizzi's Honour With genial fidelity to Richard Condon's triple-cross comedy of mafioso manners, veteran John Huston keeps it in *his* 'family' as daughter Anjelica pops wickedly up to net Jack Nicholson's bemused killer, love-torn Charley, from a killing new wife (Kathleen Turner).

My Beautiful Laundrette Low-budget, high-jinking mix of racism, gay love and Thatcherite ethics in today's Britain. Hanif Kureishi wittily scripts and Stephen Frears warmly directs ironic, tangled tale of South London Pakistani lad and ex-NF boyfriend managing title business for Saeed Jaffrey's superb, rascally rich uncle.

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raw and likely sex, when dad takes a late revenge. Appealing, but the thought kept coming: it must have been *uglier* than this.

Richard Donner's **The Goonies**, with Steven Spielberg as an executive producer, projects a gang of kids (in a small town where houses are threatened by property developers) down underground, booby-trapped trails after treasure in a hidden-lagooned pirate galleon, their progress hampered by a fat Mama counterfeiter, two of her sons and our inability to understand some 50 per cent of the dialogue. Mama's third son Sloth is an idiot monster, who assists the Goonies in a sail-slitting exploit out of *Captain Blood* (a clip from which has been seen on TV). Cute and avoidable. But the perfect punishment for naughty children this Xmas is to threaten them with Jeannot Szwarc's **Santa Claus — The Movie**, which stars Dudley Moore as an elf (elf-abuse?) and makes a lot of other mistakes, too. □

CO-OPS

Under house arrest

Jules Lubbock

SADLY, IT IS as true today as it was a century ago that the great study and object of government is the art of How Not To Do It.

Of few things is this more true than Housing Co-operatives. Well-intentioned people in all political parties and in the housing professions are agreed, as are council tenants themselves, that these are a promising and an increasingly well-tested solution to some of the problems of public housing. But let anyone have the effrontery to propose a real scheme for real homes for real people and one branch of government or another is sure to spend more toil working out How It Is Not To Be Done than it would take them to build the houses with their own fair hands.

Thus in Liverpool, two years ago, the Militant Tendency put an end to the popular co-op programme there. Today, in Glasgow, the Tory government, not to be outdone by Militant, has, through the Scottish Office, found a means if not actually to forestall a co-operative programme at least to delay it and frustrate people's immediate hopes for a decent home in decent surroundings. And why? Simply because the scheme is the brainchild of Labour-controlled Glasgow Council, albeit with the support of local Tory councillors.

The Council's problem is that 60,000 of its 172,000 homes stand in the vast overspill estates built on farmland after the war. These are not high-rise or deck-access, but potentially desirable, traditional three-storey flats and houses, each requiring about £15,000 for modernisation, heat and sound insulation and the enclosure of untended spaces to make gardens. Without it, these districts will unravel like a piece of knitting with homes boarded up as older people move out and young families refuse to move in to an increasingly desolate area where infant mortality is as high as in the 1930s and five times the national average. In one case this has already happened. Of 90 houses set in beautiful woodland, only three remained occupied two years ago.

In 1984 professional feasibility studies were made, at the Council's expense, of six schemes. That October Glasgow applied to the Scottish Office for grant and subsidy approval for the first three. Six months elapsed while the Scottish Office ruminated. Then, in the spring of this year, George Younger, the Secretary of State, publicly declared his approval in principle. This seemed too good to be true, but not altogether illogical since the scheme was in line with Tory policy in privatising public assets, using a mix of public and private finance, and devolving power from the local authority to the tenants.

Glasgow's solution was to sell the houses to co-ops at a very low price, to declare them Housing Action Areas eligible for maximum improvement grants of 90 per cent, with the balance to be borrowed on favourable private loans. The beauty was that each co-op would be totally in control of its affairs, able to set its own rents and, in due course and if it so wished, to use any surpluses for further environmental improvements or to encourage local businesses. For there is barely a grocer, a hairdresser or a DIY store within three miles, transport is dreadful and unemployment can be as high as 60 per cent.

But now the supreme wizards in the art of How Not To Do It went to work for a further six months. The Lords of the Treasury, it seems, finally declared that too much Exchequer subsidy was involved and that private loans made the plan financially precarious. But the principle having been agreed, alternative funding, exclusively public, was offered through the Housing Corporation this September.

There had to be a snag. And there was one. It is an absolute condition of such funding that a Fair Rent be charged. Accordingly the senior Rent Officer for Scotland was wheeled in to indicate a probable rent of £20 a week, compared to council rents of £10 and predicted rents of £12.50 for Glasgow's original scheme. The lunacy is that the Rent Officer hasn't a clue about setting rents in the overspill estates; that, while the high rents will make little difference to two thirds of the tenants on housing benefit, it will effectively operate as a punitively high income tax on the others and a disincentive to anyone seeking employment; and, finally, enormous surpluses would accrue to the co-ops which they could certainly use to stimulate employment in their areas but not to reduce rents to make it worthwhile for people to work.

Some of the co-ops may perforce accept the government's offer. Meanwhile, a year has been wasted and another winter is coming, another winter in which people will freeze in their bathrooms, go to sleep in damp beds, and another five of every hundred babies born to them will die before their first birthday — all in order that the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and their experts in How It Is Not To Be Done can rub their hands in satisfaction at their achievements in government before blazing fires in Edinburgh, Westminster and Esher. □

MUSIC

Noise annoys

Biba Kopf

THE COMMON MYTH of music — that nature is best mirrored in harmony — is its most enduring lie. This autumn, proof of the deceit has been furnished almost daily. Where is the harmony in the destruction wrought by the Columbian volcano eruption, or the Mexico City earthquake? Harmony might be the ideal of a music lover seeking to transport him or herself from the horror of the city through pleasing, pastoral sequences and clusters of events promoting some idyllic relationship between humankind and nature. But it does not tell the whole of what I hear.

In these times, saturated as they are with myriad sounds, even the music lover's sweetest melodies contribute to the cacophony of the daily listening experience. At home, neighbours' noises bleed through thin walls; out in the street, in the shopping mall, pedestrians are assaulted by endless jumpcuts from one music to another as they pass by stores. Not forgetting traffic noise, human voices, birds singing. The sound most of us hear is a thunderous discord compounded from all the disturbances and dissonances of city existence. Noise, then, irrefutably negates the ideal of music. It also happens to be the most accurate image of Mother Nature in all her turbulent, catastrophic glory. But as a city dweller with no interest in escaping the realities of urban living, that last observation is of no interest to me. I'd rather seek noise in music — as opposed to some pastoral piece that alienates me from my living environment — as the cracked mirror image of the city's manifest possibilities for excitement, its uglinesses and its compensatingly cruel beauties.

Such a need is not easily met in a media-locked Britain whose pop industry has a vested interest in upholding harmony's ideologically determined, but presently unjustified hegemony in music. East Kilbride's **Jesus And Mary Chain** are one of the few homegrown groups prepared to attempt a coup. Their debut LP *Psychocandy* (Blanco Y Negro) subjects it to the blasting process of dirty, distorted guitar noise combined with petulant vocals keeling along on Sixties girl-group drum rolls. The odd wispy melody that manages to weather the noisestorms has the forlorn, hardy beauty of the first wild rose to push through the rubble. Thus do they make it possible to hear a tune again without it alienating the listener from his or her concrete surrounds.

But noise, like any addiction, traps the user in a cycle of ever diminishing returns. JAMC might just be too romantic ultimately to satisfy desire's ever expanding needs or do harmony's hegemony any serious damage. It is left to the British concerts of New Yorkers **Sonic Youth** and **Arto Lindsay's Ambitious Lovers** to afford a real glimpse at future possibilities

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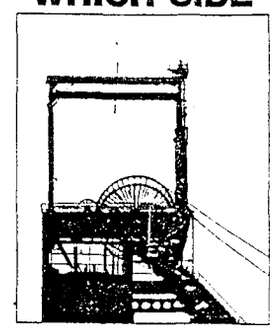

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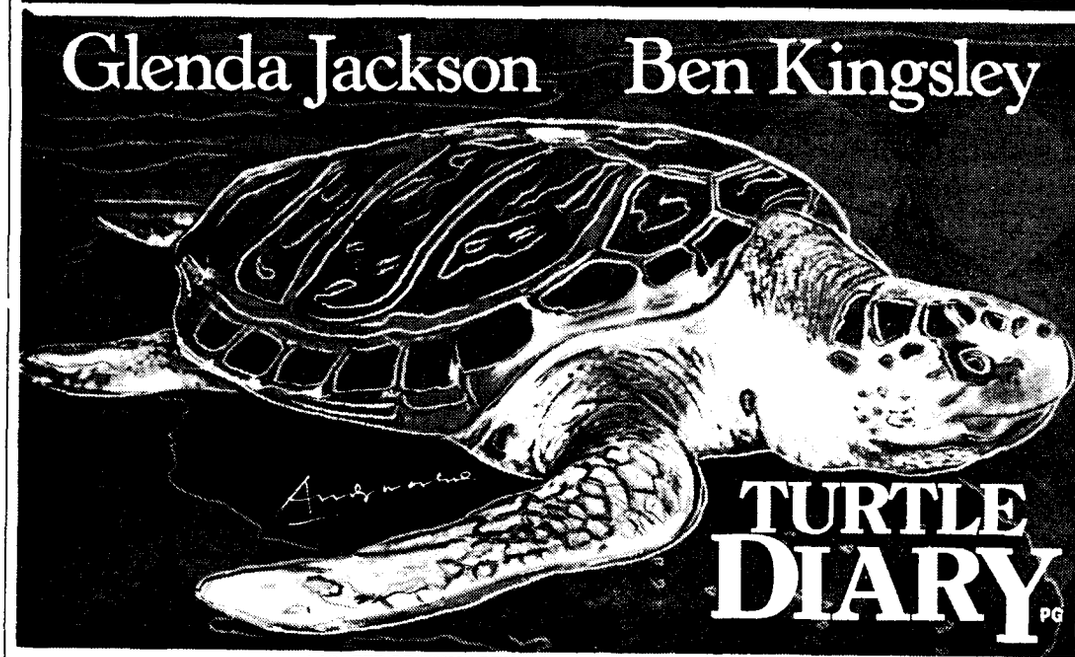

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loosed by the forced disintegration of conventional harmony; and with it the commodity structure that profits from its saleability. For both are experienced noise campaigners who bring to their genuine love of more accessible musics — in Sonic Youth's case, livewire strands of American rock; in Arto Lindsay's, pan-tropical dance configurations, big city funk, Portuguese love lyrics — the more rigorous disciplines acquired from their earlier associations with Manhattan avant garde.

As guitarist in the No New York group DNA Arto Lindsay pioneered noise as negation and as a shortcut to ecstasy. Today he is more broadminded, but no less intense. At the ICA with his Ambitious Lovers, he incorporated his pan-tropical interests, funk and noise abstracts in songs run together in rapid series of changing styles or as exhilarating fusions of all his concerns. The set's dynamic still turns on his guitar din. Here, its character was more benign.

For their part, Sonic Youth's London concerts attest to noise's more common destructive character. Bearing in mind their goal of redeeming the spirit of upheaval that galvanised American rock in 1969, they set out to blast it loose with massive noise reverberations wrenched from variously ravaged guitars. In so doing they establish that, to reinvent the original excitement of rock, the point is not simply to revive it but to brutalise it, rub it out if possible, negate its inroads into musical respectability with ever rougher, rawer noise and then start again. Its destruction complete, ruins beneath their feet, Sonic Youth feel relaxed enough to construct a singularly affecting harmony from sonics tapped out on the backs of their guitars.

Called 'Expressway To Your Skull', it's dedicted to Theresa, one of the Texan **Butthole Surfers**' two stand-up drummers. Given their willingness to head up the asshole end of noise, she can probably do with the support. Their Peckham Ambulance Station appearance was a quite extraordinary exhibition of utter abandon. Not so much trash aesthetics, as the noise of aesthetics being well and truly trashed. □

Sonic Youth have a 12" single, 'Flower', coming from Doublevision; Butthole Surfers' 'Cream Corn from the Socket of Davis' (12") is due from Fundamental.

ART

Seny and rauxa

John Spurling

Homage to Barcelona and **Torres-Garcia: Grid-Pattern-Sign**
Hayward, until 23 February, then Barcelona

SENY IS AN untranslatable Catalan word evoking 'common sense, prudence and wisdom'. Its opposite is *rauxa*: 'this national weakness could be best translated as naive and euphoric improvisation'. So we learn from Salvador Giner, one of the many essayists in a thorough but indigestible catalogue devoted to the culture of Barcelona between 1888 and 1936.

The accompanying **Homage to Barcelona** exhibition is a lot more entertaining. Designed by a firm of Barcelona architects it even re-orientates the internal space of the Hayward by throwing a cheerful white colonnade with a yellow raised pavement across the two ground-floor galleries, countering both the dour concrete walls and the sense of separation induced by the stairs. This certainly looks like *seny*.

The period of Barcelona's history we are saluting — from the Universal Exhibition of 1888 to the outbreak of the Civil War — is a curious corner of art history. The *fin de siècle* part, coinciding with Barcelona's reputation as 'the city of bombs' — it remained the capital of world anarchism throughout our period — is difficult to do justice to in an exhibition, since it was dominated by architecture. The movement known as *Modernisme* has recognisable affinities with *Art Nouveau*, Symbolism and all that convoluted sexual sublimation of the same period here and elsewhere in Europe; but the fairyland invoked by the leading Catalan architects, Domenech, Puig and Gaudi, is distinctly weirder and more extravagant. It is also oddly more authoritative, as if the international fashion for arts and crafts, tiles and briar-rose ironwork, mediaeval fantasy and whimsical asymmetry had at last found its true purpose as the expression of Catalan nationalism and Barcelona's reawakening. Most of this, though, with its unmistakeable element of *rauxa*, one has to judge from slides; the designs and furniture suggest more of the *seny* side, which is presumably what actually holds the buildings up.

The *Modernisme* painters seem to have worked best in the realist tradition, with only occasional mild outings into Symbolism. The principal locals, founders of the artists' centre *Els Quatre Gats*, were Ramon Casas and Santiago Rusinol, who are well represented in the exhibition with lively portraits of their friends and colleagues and relaxed and spacious interiors. They were joined at *Els Quatre Gats* by a group of younger *modernistes*, one of whom, a teenager, made a sign and a menu-cover for the café, held his first one-man show there, was drawn by Casas and himself drew other members of the circle. Several of this precocious youth's realist works have been lent to the exhibition by the Museu Picasso in Barcelona and there are also three of his Symbolist 'Blue Period' paintings, made in 1901-4, when he was coming and going between Barcelona and Paris.

Youthful Picasso carved in stone by Pau Gargallo i Catalan

Around 1906 *Modernisme* was displaced by *Noucentisme* (New-century-ism), a movement which combined Catalan nationalism and modernity with a new desire to be classical and Mediterranean and keep up with the Cézannes and others just round the coast in Provence. The painters Sunyer and Nogués and the sculptors Casanovas and Clarà were among the leading *noucentiste* artists, but the arrival in Barcelona in 1917 of a bunch of avant-garde refugees from the First World War — Picabia, Gleizes and Laurencin among them — temporarily sent the new generation of Catalans whoring after new gods. Only one of them, however, stayed permanently attached to the avant-garde, the Barcelona-born Joan Miró. He and Picasso are both represented in the exhibition by charming derrière-garde paintings from 1917-18, while across the way is a rich blue, Japanesey screen, circa 1923, by a still younger fellow-citizen, Salvador Dalí. If *seny* remained the watchword at home, a good deal of *rauxa* was about to be unloosed on the world at large.

There are sculptures, ceramics, jewellery, posters and stained glass at the Hayward, as well as furniture and pictures — all very well integrated and displayed, until it comes to the last section: work by Miró and Picasso reacting to the coming of civil war. Here, in a bare corral next to the coffee bar, far away upstairs and isolated from all that is temporarily Barcelona, the gallery exacts its revenge for the designers' success downstairs.

It's true that there's another *alumnus* of Barcelona sharing the top floor. **Joaquín Torres-García**, having moved to Spain with his family from his birthplace in Uruguay,

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worked for a time with Gaudí on the stained-glass windows for two of his churches, but soon found himself in sympathy with *Noucentisme*. His carefully organised jumble of a *Barcelona Street Scene*, painted in 1917 and exhibited downstairs, already suggests the abstract grids which next claimed his allegiance, after he had left Barcelona and fallen in with Constructivists. But his mature work was peculiar to himself: 'Universal Constructivism' was a marriage of grids with the earth colours and symbolic outlines of pre-Columbian art in America. The better to consummate this marriage he returned to Uruguay in 1934 and remained there until his death in 1949. Alas, serious and worthy as they may be, backed with an earnest body of theory and calculated to make *rauxa* lie down with *seny*, the effect of these paintings in large quantities is altogether too calming, like someone shifting the beads on an abacus while muttering interminable universal truths in Esperanto. □

Bohemian Erik Satie painted by Ramon Casas (detail)

THEATRE

Roll up, roll up

Benedict Nightingale

Entertaining Strangers
DAVID EDGAR *St Mary's Church, Dorchester*

IT'S SICKENINGLY sad that Ann Jellicoe should have been driven by the parsimony of South West Arts to resign as director of the pioneering organisation she founded; but at least she can be sure that her last production for the Colway Theatre Trust is as little likely to be forgotten in Wessex as (let's say) the celebrations after the Battle of Trafalgar.

Entertaining Strangers is as large and triumphant a piece as the emergent community-play movement has yet presented. The speaking roles are just over 170, but you'd have thought that an underestimate, given the bustling events epically packed into Dorchester's St Mary's Church. Just about the whole town seemed to be milling around in there, either watching or acting out a history many of them had helped compile from old newspapers, church and parish records and, in some cases, the evidence of gravestones.

It's an event, a phenomenon, but also a play, supervised and assembled by no less a talent than David Edgar's. His script covers the period 1829 to 1873 and concentrates on the evolution of two local notables: the founder of the brewers Eldridge Pope, Sarah Eldridge, and the hell-fire vicar who did intermittent battle with her, Henry Moule. She is, to be honest, not the most interesting of characters, spending (as she does) most of the play cannily expanding her business, transforming herself from publican to gentlewoman and interacting with the other members of her increasingly prosperous clan. But he is absolutely fascinating, the sort of Victorian you instinctively find yourself describing in geological terms: flinty integrity; granite determination; rock-like obduracy. As played in old age by the conscientiously craggy John Hanson, he even looks as if he's been carved on Mount Rushmore.

There's some swapping of roles as the evening proceeds; and when we meet Moule he's Rod Drew, a more modestly sculpted gentleman. But the personality is already formed. He alienates the poor of his new parish, by refusing to continue paying communicants for swigging the wine with shouts of 'cheers Lord', and he drives away the rich, by inveighing as intransigently against their gambling and blaspheming as against the local whores and drunks. 'Sin is sin,' he bluntly opines, 'its wages death.' Yet when disaster strikes, he's still there, dogmatically dependable to the last. So far from accepting an invitation to escape the cholera epidemic of 1854, he almost singlehandedly prevents it spreading from the outlying slums into the town of Dorchester: collecting clothes from the dead, boiling them clean, visiting the sick and dying, offering them sympathy without compromise: 'Sin is an abomination and his child is cursed for evermore,' he characteristically informs the sister of a comatose harlot, not without grief.

Edgar is large-minded enough to respect this grim do-gooder, but right-minded enough not to let respect cloud his judgment. The play's perspective is, as you'd expect, defiantly socialist. Much is heard and seen of spoiled and uncaring nobs, exploited labourers and brutalised women, families crammed into tiny, dank hovels. Indeed, the point of the piece is embodied in its title. Far from 'suspecting people who have more time for the needs of utter strangers than for those they know', as Sarah admits to doing in act one, perhaps we should entertain strangers, 'rescue them, snatch them from the very jaws of hell', as she comes tentatively to believe in act two.

She's converted from one stance to the other by Moule's exemplary selflessness. Moule changes too, up to a point. Early on, he sermonises about the scriptural duty of servants to obey their masters: his experiences during the plague, when fathers must continue earning their pittance in the fields whether or not their children are dying at home, leave him thinking rather more of masters' obligations to their servants. He's a man of his time; his religion is a sort of gunboat Christianity; but at least the barrels end pointing in roughly the right direction.

The impression left by the evening, though, is far from dourly didactic. It's always busy and energetic, often festive. The techniques Edgar developed for that celebrated *Nicholas Nickleby* of his — members of the cast playing a brisk game of pass-the-parcel with the sentences in which they describe their feelings and narrate their doings — keep the story hurrying unstoppably along. The action switches from platform to platform and, at more spectacular moments, from them to the floor below. Exotic pub signs — a criss-cross of mops, spades, sickles, for instance — appear from nowhere. On come the fingerbowl classes in their carriages, or the yokels in their harvest parade, or a line of great, gaudy, vaguely Turkish puppets commemorating the allied achievements in the Crimea. Or up go fairground ads ('test your strength'), a frock-coated gent blunders past you mumbling 'where's the beer tent?', on lollop human horses with brightly dressed boys on their shoulders, and we're at the Dorchester races.

It's exhilarating, fun, yet socially also so obviously worthy as to make South West Arts' decision to halve Colway's tiny grant quite inexplicable. This is no posh and stylised civic pageant, but history graphically relived. Isn't it good that a community should learn more, much more about the past that has shaped its present, the roots that have determined its identity? Isn't it good that it should deepen its understanding of itself? And isn't it good that it should so skilfully entertain itself, as well as any outsider willing to pay a few bob for a ticket, as it goes about the business of auto-instruction? If only your average or even your above-average subsidised theatre could claim remotely as much. □

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Nick Duffy

By bike from Beijing

Madeleine Harmsworth

IN THE DRAB courtyard of our concrete-block hotel in Beijing, we unpacked and assembled the sparkling new all-terrain mountain bicycles which a canny American company had donated to the first ever bicycle tour of Inner Mongolia. In five days we would take the train to Hohhot, the capital of the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region. Meanwhile, seeing China's capital by bicycle was on the schedule.

It took all evening and half the following morning to put the machines together, by which time we were bursting to try them out on the city's busy streets, among the shoals of local cyclists on their heavy single-speeds. But the young Chinese official assigned to us for the duration, our guide and interpreter Mr Song, was adamant: we could not cycle in Beijing — even though many Western cyclists (including me, on a previous trip) had done so.

Grilled by our intrepid Panamanian-born American tour leader, Angel Rodriguez, Mr Song produced an inexhaustible string of excuses. 'Your bikes do not have licences.'

'We will get some.'

'You do not have bells.'

'We will buy some.'

'You have no locks.'

'We will purchase padlocks and chains.'

Still Mr Song would not budge. What had brought about this embargo would remain a mystery, like all the other sudden shifts in policy experienced by tourists in China. Mr Song was doubtless acting on orders from above: perhaps 'they' feared that our fat-tyred, 15-speed bikes, never before seen in Beijing, would cause traffic chaos. The year before, down south in Guangdong Province, crowds had materialised whenever we stopped to marvel at our 10-speeds, some of which were far from brilliant.

Eventually, Mr Song allowed us to ride outside the city: the 20 miles downhill from the Great Wall to the Ming Tombs. It was a start.

In the industrial city of Datong, where we broke our journey to Hohhot, he permitted us, after further lengthy arguments and negotiations, to take to the wheel again. Escorted by white-coated traffic policemen on motorcycles, who roared ahead officiously scattering vehicles and pedestrians, we rode the ten miles out to the Yungang Buddhist Caves, pausing 'to rest' every mile or so. Considering the combined cycling strength of the 20 cyclists in the group — two of us British, most West Coast 'bikeys' with thousands of miles' experience — I began to anticipate open rebellion.

Once we reached the Mongolian grasslands, Mr Song relaxed, but , by then, we had an escort (invisible all the time we were travelling, promptly materialising for meals) of six vehicles containing 21 Chinese and Mongolians, including a female doctor and journalist and half a dozen security men. A responsibility shared is a responsibility halved.

Feeling like dogs let off the leash, we spread out along the deserted dirt tracks which criss-cross the plains; or bumped childlike over the parched, treeless, rolling terrain making believe we were Genghis Khan's horsemen. But we were still apprehensive. When two of our number got lost we concealed the fact from Mr Song for a couple of hours, afraid that such mismanagement would cause him — or 'them' — to curtail our cycling once more.

The Chinese are schizophrenic about the new bicycle-touring phenomenon. China is the land of the bicycle. There are an estimated 77 million in daily use. The private ownership of cars was, until recently, banned and they are still beyond the means of almost everyone. So men transport pigs to market on their rear racks, women carry children to school on their cross-bars, workers pedal long distances, in all weathers, to offices and factories. But anyone wanting to undergo hours in the saddle for pleasure is (perhaps understandably) deemed at worst crazy, at best comical. So when, in 1980, a pushy American called Fred Kaplan mooted the idea of cycle tours to the Chinese, he was told, 'No'. And again, 'No'.

But Kaplan, who had conducted regimented bus tours with displeasure, persevered and was finally given the go-ahead. The first China Passage bicycle tour, from the Macao border to Guangzhou (Canton) in January 1981, was an undisputed success. Unexpectedly, Chinese television lauded it and the numbers and varieties of tours have multiplied.

Even so, the Chinese authorities continue to show resistance. They like bus tours because they prefer groups (and this goes for their own people, too) that they can keep under control to boisterous individuals whom they cannot keep in constant sight.

Which is precisely why, like Kaplan, I think that seeing China by bicycle is the best possible way. Our bicycles gave us a freedom of movement denied the average bus-bound tourist. In Mongolia they allowed us access to remote mud-built villages where we were the first Western tourists to stay in the spartan, commune dormitories — with unusually dim lighting, even for China; with no running water; and with no privacy when taking it in turns to wash in the enamel bowl provided. We also bedded down (on wooden platforms) in *yurts — the skin and felt tents used by nomadic* horsemen.

And while the People's Republic is doing its best to incorporate, even crush, the Mongolian way of life, there remains much, we were glad to discover, that is alien to the Chinese way. Like love of alcohol. One evening, the ruddy-cheeked head of a commune, tipple in hand, sang us rousing Mongolian toasts and sad folk songs long into the night.

The bikes also gave us the freedom to stop. If we wished to stare at the pastel shades of faraway hills, at the shimmering start of the Gobi desert, or if we wanted to converse with a camel as it grazed the sparse vegetation, we had only to apply our brakes. Above all the bicycles brought us face to face with the people — the hundreds who lined the entrances to the villages to bid us welcome; the solitary herdsman astride his stocky pony — at a level and a pace which is their level and pace. □

China bicycle tours are organised by: China Passage, 302 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10001, USA; Exodus Expeditions (China Passage British agents), 100 Wandsworth High Street, London SW18; Ian Honeysett, Cathay Cycling Tours, 2 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9DZ.

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Naseem Khan
Two into one

FOUR WOMEN ON STAGE — two black, two white, but all dressed in soft blue African prints. Limpid music, as they gently swirl long strips of white cloth — water of course. The harmony is smashed by a towering metal creature crashing in on needle-like legs encased in glittering rings, head like a horrid huge mosquito. It chucks a metal fish on to the waters. The women reject it, push the monster away and then we are all invited to join in a friendly but shambolic form of the Gay Gordons.

Confused? You won't be, when you realise this show takes place on the borderline where first world meets third and where, in a tangle of cultural languages, you can rarely expect things to run straight. The show of which this episode formed part is an extraordinary collaboration, the fruits of which can be seen at the Commonwealth Institute till 1 December and thereafter for a few performances in Cumbria.

On the one side there's Welfare State, our own well-established group of 'civic magicians'. On the other, there's the Bagamoya College of Arts in Tanzania, which sounds a good deal more interesting than your average arts college (acrobatics, music and political studies form part of the curriculum). The two were brought together by the Commonwealth Institute to create a show to go with the major exhibition, *The Human Story*. Two State people spent three weeks in Tanzania devising a scenario. A week before the show opened, the group arrived. Some might feel the companies were being asked the impossible — a new concept, a mutual working language, all in four weeks. Most products given such a short time would have fallen back on the superficial. Not this one. It doesn't fully achieve what it sets out to do. There are hiccups in balance, a faltering of its internal logic, times when what one considers (wrongly?) pre-eminently Western prime concerns (pollution, industrialisation, etc.) take over. But superficial it is not.

It is odd. It is quirky. It is joyful and teeming with inventive devices. Above the stage bob long coloured lanterns with quasi-medieval emblems. Around it stretch hangings and awnings and buntings. At one end there's a dais for a band of mixed African and Western instruments. Around the central area sit the audience, at friendly little tables, pretending we're in a village square. At the back is a bar and, later, food. Although John Fox of Welfare State makes it all sound straightforward — five moral tales interspersed with music and participatory dance — it does not operate in the so-called normal world of social realism. An appalling death-like ogre with vast white head trundles on a heap of mechanical junk that opens out, magically, to offer a glittering array of military possibilities. Skeletons appear throughout, not in a gloomy Western sense, but more lightheartedly; one of the nicest bits was a song and dance routine for four skeletons. And what singing, in general; what dancing, from the Tanzanians. They beat into a cocked hat the sedate British barn dances with which the action was punctuated.

A lively show, in short, with an essential vibrancy that had not fully worked itself out in theatrical terms, but left you asking questions rather than just running for the bus. That is not the way with all foreign culture imports.

Bringing in traditional culture is probably one of the hardest areas of the arts. How do you do it? Do you just reproduce, willy nilly? A recent Mime Festival, for instance, had Jagran from India, a mime troupe that works largely in the villages putting over uplifting messages and using a style that has references to film and popular culture. So here they came with their exhortations to Eat More Greens and Use Methane Gas, watched bewildered by a Western audience who wouldn't have known a methane gas if it had met one. In India they are hilarious; here they are a curiosity.

Arts Worldwide, who bring series of first-rate musicians and dancers over from mainly rural societies, follow the same be-damned line (or have till recently): popping on Tunisian musicians, Chinese dancers, African instrumentalists in a neat concentration when the form is in fact more robust and more everyday than that. Take the Chhau dancers from West Bengal, their last group, performing a male folk dance, danced round specific points of the Hindu year mainly to huge thwacked kettledrums (uncomfortable inside a theatre) and reedy village flutes. As staged at the Place, cohorts of identically dressed men, wearing bland china-like white masks, charged and pranced across the stage — broad, stamping vainglorious movements that fitted the martial numbers well. Off they went, and more entered. It's a rumbustious dance, done with splendid dash and athleticism, but it's very simple and, for all its attraction, quickly palls. But then it's not meant to be seen like that. It would have been part of other events, an atmosphere of general celebration.

The question is in fact a huge one, with relevance for the English folk movement as much as for foreign tours. Re-define or ossify? It may or may not be behind the change in Arts Worldwide's staging for their next event — a Greek popular music troupe performing in Britain between 30 November and 7 December, and for which venues (from town halls to working men's clubs) are being apparently turned into 'Greek tavernas' where audiences will be able to drink, dance and eat as well as hear the troupe. Will it be 'turning out ethnic art for an airport market', as Fox said in another context, or a step forward?

What it does not seek to do — few are bold enough to try — is to attempt to tap the archetypes of different cultures. Fox's 'common imagery as a catalyst for two cultures' offers the possibility of a dialogue. All too often 'ethnic' manifestations are monologues, spoken by a stranger, in a foreign language, in the dark. □

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams
Stardust

THE NEW SERIES of plays from short stories by Noel Coward takes its overall title from that of the first one, **Star Quality** (BBC1), adapted by Stanley Price, which has also been the best of them to date. Young Bryan Snow is having his first play put on in London. He imagines his troubles are over now that he's been accepted, but knows nothing as yet of the compulsive powerplays and baboonlike shows of temperament that actors and directors apparently (and convincingly) went through in the late-Thirties West-End world, where 'star quality' was all.

The star in question is Lorraine Barry, played by Susannah York, who would seem to have met people like herself, judging from her relished embodiment. Miss Barry divides to rule, first favouring the innocence of her young star-vehicle builder, eventually surrendering to the experience of its mechanic, director Ray Malcolm, an ideally cast Ian Richardson. We see the now redundant young writer lingering in the gallery after his (or rather, her) successful first night. 'I wish they'd take their stuff with them when they go,' mutters a cleaning lady. 'Are you something to do with the show then?' 'I was,' says our discountenanced dramatist, having the last word in someone else's happily superior play.

If that were all there was to it, it wouldn't be much perhaps; but, in Coward, the sub-plots are at least as interesting as the main event and, in *Star Quality*, the soft but second-rate character of Marian Blake — friend and foil to stardom, though 'a monumental bum-crawler' in reality — is the subject of another tug-of-love/hate between director and star. 'She's worse than bad,' says Richardson, who wants to get rid of her before the play comes to town, 'she's horribly, abominably competent.'

The play was a blessing that hasn't been repeated in the subsequent two stories. Either Coward or director Mike Ockrent or both seem less comfortable in the broader satirical world of *Mrs Capper's Birthday*, a mostly working-class outing. We're in the Sixties now and one of the last of the old treasures is talking to her late husband in the way that Patricia Hayes usually seems to. She even does it in the bus. Arriving at her swinging employer's home on the Sunday morning after a party, she finds her mistress in bed with the wrong man. Suddenly we're upstairs in a different play: 'Did we do things?' 'I expect so.' 'Were we any good?'

Mrs Capper does her satirical best to smooth troubled sheets, but her birthday has started out in the wrong bed and gets worse. Later, her daughter regrets that she is taking over as Mum. 'Everything is turned upside down,' she says. Is this Coward voicing his views on a decade that was not popular with his generation? Even if everything is hopelessly displaced in swinging London, he seems to be saying, at least the good old service classes can still be relied upon to keep talking to their dead husbands. ▷

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Perhaps it is just that Coward's period prejudice-for-the-sake-of-it seems rather obvious by now, and therefore untrue. His American sketchbook — amply deployed in the most recent screenplay, *What Mad Pursuit*, again by Stanley Price — is particularly over-stuffed with caricatures of unbelievable or extinct monstrosities. These include its apparently straight protagonist, an English writer, intended to be Somerset Maugham.

We start off quite sympathising with the beleaguered Evan, tricked into a 'quiet weekend', which turns into a riot of non-stop parties, by socialite Carroll Baker. She can hardly get her hands on him for the laxative-popping gay playwright Lester, who asks him to leave the door of their shared bathroom open as he can't bear to be alone. 'Shouldn't you see someone about that?' asks Evan. 'I do,' says Lester, 'I see as many people as I can, all the time.' Evan doesn't get a wink and the next day's parties are too much for him. 'They've set *The Idiot* in Texas and called it *Samovar*?' he asks incredulously as a male film star tries to force him to go swimming and/or re-write the novel in his favour.

One problem with the play is that no one except Miss Baker was even pretending to be a real American. Another is that Evan is a cipher. You keep wanting him to leave the bloody play since he wants to so badly, but he can't because it's about him. He manages it in the end, but breaks an arm and a leg doing so and has to be brought back in a taxi. 'Darling,' goes the reliable Coward curtain line, 'How lovely to have you back.' □

Weekend competition

No 2901 **Set by Di Dact**

Old boy, if we may so call him, of the school of compery, Parrott major has brought further honour to the institution by the compilation of yet another hard-cover collection. *How to Become Ridiculously Well Read in One Evening* is published at £7.95 by Viking whose governors have most generously offered copies of the book as additional prizes for pupils who perform well in the appointed task, to wit the composition of a summary of a major work of literature in either 120 words of prose or 12 lines of verse. Works may be chosen from any period and any country, but to encourage originality we are banning Austen, Dickens, Hardy, James, Kipling and Shakespeare. Anyone trying to cheat by re-using old material will be most severely dealt with. Homework should be in by 12 December.

No 2898 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Sonnets on early sightings of Santa.

Report **By Mercy Dash**

A surprisingly popular comp and no room to do it justice. You seem to be awfully torn between cynicism and sentiment; it must be your age. Hon. menshes to Hamill, Maling, Stanley, Webster, Norman, Mallett, Benson, Holtby, Bunker, Griffiths, Evans (Lissa), Veale, Bellenger, Prince, Sharpless and Donnelly and £12 for the winners.

The mists of autumn and the growing chill
Prepare us for the horrors yet to be,
Long nights, cold feet, unspeakable TV,
Damp morning starts, black ice on every hill,
The winter-heightened fear of falling ill,
Night prowlers whom we hear but cannot see,
Unfocused slides of summer in Torquay,
The menace of the central heating bill:

But all this is as naught for I have seen
The ultimate emissary of doom
Between the toilets and the staff canteen
Of Hunt & Blunt a sleazy little room
Or grotto (ugh!) adorns a festive scene
And ghastly guffaws rock the tinsel tomb.

PHILIP A. NICHOLSON

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains;
From you I have been absent since the Spring.
While nymphs have sported with their callow swains
I've searched for you in stores from Thame to Tring.

Oft have I travelled in the realms of Brent
And many goodly snips and bargains seen
Throughout the summer of my discontent.
O jocund Santa! Tell me where you've been?

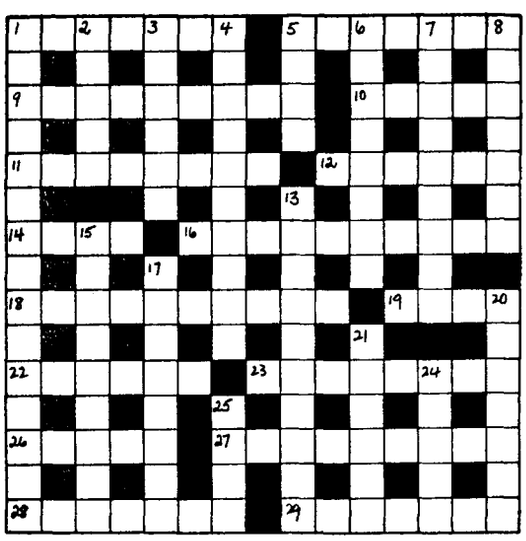
But, wild white beard, O breath of Autumn's being
Thou art returned, ere falls a leaf, forsooth,
In ragged red, with rheumy eyes near-seeing
To sacred nurseries of blooming Youth!

The days may yet reach thirty Centigrade
But thy eternal winter shall not fade.

MRS M. GOTHARD

Weekend Crossword 1501

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1501, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 13 December.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

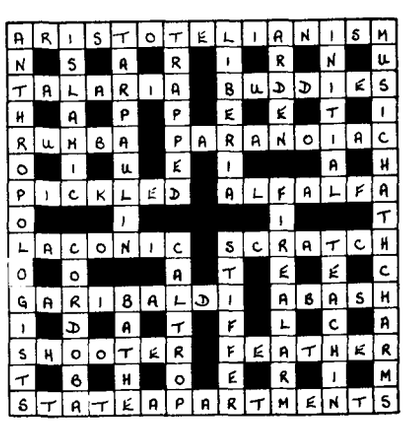
1. Smug fellow makes shell break (7)
5. Something to eat since brother caught a man without one (7)
9. Released part of body goes into action (9)
10. Lace for Iris (5)
11. Started without you being astonished (8)
12. Place of worship in which her sin is reformed (6)
14. Close imitation in the choice of clothes (4)
16. How bathers change as a means to cleanliness (10)
18. Waterfront employer who sounds like a pointer to hostilities (10)
19. Insect born for the air? (4)
22. With courage of long standing in a captain (6)
23. God endlessly appears to pre-eminent historian (8)
26. It may be past but it is still exciting (5)
27. A feature of the country is to be hesitant before disputes (9)
28. Favour fixed in memory (7)
29. Times of year which make a point with flowers (7)

DOWN

1. Relative idler becomes innkeeper (7)
2. Research into Handel very systematically (5)
3. Five among these bodies of men would be labourers (6)
4. Goddess who is essentially a means of communication (10)
5. It would be wet if this historian wed (4)
6. Theory about different line on map (8)
7. I am slow in breaking truce in area of house (9)
8. Help set about a woman (7)
13. 'As it isn't, it ain't. That's logic,' he said (10)
15. Bits of coast seen at the end of a capital flight? (9)
17. Wild faun left with plenty of resources (8)
18. Composer about to be stumped as a playwright (7)
20. During gambling men make commands (7)
21. Not some women without heads (6)
24. River for wild heron (5)
25. The second person to come from the orient (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1499



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APPOINTMENTS

THIRD WORLD COMMUNICATIONS

THIRD WORLD BOOKSHOP MANAGER WANTED

Third World Bookshop is looking for a dynamic Manager. Knowledge of Third World issues and book trade essential. Must be able to establish links with librarians in London and around the UK and generally to promote Third World literature within and outside the UK. The successful candidate must be prepared to travel widely in the Third World to secure books for the bookshop. Employment terms are competitive.

SALES ASSISTANT WANTED

Third World Bookshop is also looking for an Assistant to provide support to the Manager in the above duties and the day to day running of the bookshop.

Closing date for both posts is 31 December. Starting date is February 1986.

Please send full curriculum vitae to The Publisher, Kwame Nkrumah House, 173 Old Street, London EC1V 9NJ.

CND requires two outreach workers to help develop campaigning in the regions and areas. These new posts are part of the expanding commitment to resource and develop campaigning skills throughout CND.

AREA DEVELOPMENT WORKER

To develop and encourage campaigning and organisational skills in CND regions, areas and local groups. The Development Worker will be based outside London, and will be required to travel extensively throughout Britain. Salary: **£7,050 p.a.** plus transport expenses.

AREA SUPPORT WORKER

Based at the National Office in London, the Area Support Worker will facilitate servicing of local group campaigning by the National Office. She/he will provide follow-up services to the Area Development Worker. Salary: **£7,050 p.a.** plus London Weighting **(£882 p.a.)**.

Both positions require considerable campaigning experience in CND or related organisations. Applicants should be well-organised, resourceful, good-humoured and able to communicate effectively at all levels of the Campaign.

Pay parity is in operation. **25 days holiday.**

CND welcomes your application which will be considered on merit irrespective or race, marital status or sex. Regret no wheelchair access in London. For an application form, contact **Meg Beresford on 01-250 4010.** Closing date **20 Dec.**

Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament, 22-24 Underwood Street, London N1 7JG.

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society
of civil & public servants

The Society of Civil & Public Servants, the trade union representing 90,000 executive grades in the Civil Service and public bodies invites applications for the post of:

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

The work involves negotiating and organising and requires an ability to speak in public. Experience in Civil Service or public sector trade union activity is desirable.

The salary scale runs from **£11,567** to **£18,363** plus **£1,300** Inner London Weighting. Thirty days annual leave. Non contributory pension scheme. Compulsory retirement at age 60.

Applications including a full C.V. with details of education, employment and trade union experience should be sent to the **General Secretary, Society of Civil & Public Servants, 124/130 Southwark Street, London SE1 0TU** to arrive by **11 December 1985.**

Applicants should give a *daytime telephone number* for contact purposes. Interviews for short listed candidates will be held on **18 December 1985** with final interviews on **Wednesday 8 January 1986.**

The Society is an equal opportunities employer.

THE LABOUR PARTY
has a vacancy for a
POLITICAL EDUCATION OFFICER

Salary range, £10,910-£12,665 p.a. ***depending on experience in a similar capacity***

The Political Education Officer will be responsible for preparing and ensuring the successful implementation of, a comprehensive programme of political education for the Labour Party. This programme will be closely co-ordinated with the campaigns strategy of the Party: with its work on policy development; and with the preparation of policy and campaign information by Head Office. He or she will work within the Policy Directorate, and will report directly to the Director for Policy Development.

Included among the responsibilities of the Political Education Officer will be the commissioning and preparation of materials for use in political education; the preparation of suitable programmes for summer, weekend, and other schools, and for organising speakers for these schools. He or she will work together with the Training Officer to ensure close co-ordination between the Party's political education and training programmes.

A background of activity in the wider Labour movement is essential. Experience in political education, or related work, within the Party or wider Labour movement, would be of considerable advantage.

The Labour Party is an equal opportunities employer.

APPLICATIONS FORMS FOR THIS POST ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

The Administrative and Personnel Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17 1JT. Tel: 01-703 1064

AND SHOULD BE RETURNED BY NO LATER THAN MONDAY, 16 DECEMBER 1985.

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THE LABOUR PARTY

OPPORTUNITIES TO JOIN LABOUR'S ELECTION TEAM

The Labour Party wishes to appoint a **SENIOR PRESS OFFICER** to develop and maintain a high quality service to the press and broadcasting media. The Senior Press Officer will be responsible to the Director of Campaigns and Communications for leading the work of a team of press officers in responding to first-line enquiries from the media; securing publicity for the Party's campaigns and spokesmen/women in the national, regional and specialist media; promoting the party's campaigns; and in developing media skills at all levels of the Party.

The successful candidate will have sound news judgement and a proven record as a journalist in press, broadcasting or public relations. He/she will require the energy and commitment to work long hours as a member of a professional team of communicators.

The person appointed must be a member of an appropriate trade union.

SALARY RANGE £11,880-£14,230 p.a. ***dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity.***

The Labour Party wishes to appoint a **POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER** reporting to the Director of Campaigns and Communications. He/she will be responsible for monitoring political trends, especially in current issues, other parties' policies and voters' attitudes and for assembling research evidence in these areas for the Party's key committees. The successful candidate will have day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that all the Party's activities are informed by first-rate political intelligence and will liaise closely with headquarters' personnel concerned with campaigning and electoral strategy. He/she will be the first point of contact with political survey organisations commissioned by the Labour Party and will have a major input into the Party's own substantial programme of political surveys, both quantitative and qualitive. Relevant experience might include the conduct and commissioning of survey research.

SALARY RANGE £10,910-£12,665 p.a. ***dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity.***

The Labour Party also wishes to appoint a **PUBLISHING AND MARKETING MANAGER** who will bear overall responsibility to the Director of Campaigns and Communications for the efficient production, design, sale, warehousing and despatch of all the Labour Party's printed material and merchandise.

The first priority will be to project the Party and its campaigns through printed media and good quality products in a lively creative way. He/she will also ensure a healthy surplus on trading operations. The manager will require sound marketing sense and a special knowledge of existing and potential markets for our material and a strategy for their future development. The manager will supervise the work of production and sales staff.

SALARY RANGE £11,880-£14,230 p.a. ***dependent on appropriate experience in a similar capacity.***

THE LABOUR PARTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER.

APPLICATIONS FORMS FOR THESE POSTS ARE OBTAINED FROM:

The Administrative and Personnel Officer,
The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road,
London SE17 1JT (Tel: 01-703 1064)

AND SHOULD BE RETURNED BY NO LATER THAN MONDAY, 9 DECEMBER 1985

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS UNION

A vacancy for

GENERAL SECRETARY

will exist during 1986.

Applications for the post are open to all with a proven record of current service to the Labour/Trade Union movement. All applications will be the subject of workplace ballots of members in **February 1986**.

The candidate elected will serve for five years after which a further election will be held. Applicants must be under the age of **55** at **2 January 1986**.

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS UNION

Applications should be made *in writing* to the **General Secretary, National Communications Union, Greystoke House, 150 Brunswick Road, Ealing, London W5 1AW.** All applicants will be sent an application form together with full details of the post. The completed application form should be returned giving details of the applicant's record and up to 1,000 words as an election address by the **2 January 1986.**

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

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DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY

The EPEA, which is a constituent group of the Engineers' and Managers' Association, is interested in receiving applications for the post of Deputy General Secretary.

As well as acting as deputy to the General Secretary the postholder carries his or her own responsibilities which are allocated by the General Secretary. These responsibilities may change from time to time but they will include responsibility for servicing Managerial members of the Association and, within the overall policies of the Association, for leading negotiations on their behalf. The postholder may also be given responsibility for EMA as well as EPEA affairs.

The work is both demanding and responsible. Applicants should have experience in trade union negotiations and of trade union activities generally. They should have an understanding of the interests and aspirations of professional, technical, scientific, managerial and allied staffs. They should preferably have some experience of representing them. They need to be able to communicate well, both orally and in writing; organisational and administrative abilities will also be an advantage.

The current salary scale ranges from **£23,165** to **£25,055.** There is a contributory pension scheme.

Further details, or written applications, to:

The General Secretary
Electrical Power Engineers' Association
Station House, Fox Lane North,
Chertsey, Surrey KT16 9HW

Applications must be received by the ***General Secretary by Tuesday, 17 December 1985.***

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MEETINGS

ISAAC DEUTSCHER MEMORIAL LECTURE. Margaret Rose will speak on Marx and Art (slides). 2 December 7.30 p.m., London School of Economics, New Theatre.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pahphlets, book list, programme of activities. Public Talk Sunday, 1 Dec. 8 p.m. 'The Brotherhood of Man'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

SEMINAR

German Historical Institute, London

Tuesday 3 December 5 p.m.

Prof. Dr Hagen Schulze (Berlin/Oxford)

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17 Bloomsbury Square London WC1A 2LP 01-404 5486

Tea from 4.30 p.m.

Seminar starts 5 p.m.

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ALISON, 38, independent, is very good at hiding her warmth, vulnerability and sense of humour. She wants to change that in a new relationship. Box (48) 1976.

ARE YOU a lovely minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU over 59, bored, lonely, fed up male? Are you personable, car-owner, unmarried but like to be. Then contact lady for exciting 1986, outings, holidays, weekends. Box (48) 1987.

ATTRACTIVE (some say very) intelligent (MA) woman, tall, slim, mid 40s, Midlands, seeks interesting arts orientated academic/professional for leisure activities, holidays home/abroad. Box (48) 1991.

BEING SINGLE is all very well, but sharing may be more fun. Intelligent, lively, literary divorcee, 45, seeks kind, humorous male companion for theatre, concerts etc. Box (48) 1965.

BRISTOL: ATTRACTIVE lively-minded woman, forties, professional background, would like to meet professional man, similar age. Box (48) 1984.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

DIVORCEE, EARLY 40s, graduate, radical feminist but not Lesbian, seeks warm, affectionate man for relaxing times. Politically left of centre. N. of England. Box (48) 1988.

FEMALE TEACHER/ARTIST seeks man, 40, for physical emotional, intellectual, spiritual (or trying), sense of humour, friendly relationship. Theatre, concerts, exhibitions, walking, eating, drinking, etc. Oxford. Box (48) 1979.

GENEROUS, CREATIVE, instinctively anti-sexist man, of 30+, sought by sensitive confident woman. Box (48) 1989.

GLASGOW: MATURE man, 50s, studying for BA degree, unhappily married, seeks woman for affectionate relationship, but essentially just to hold hands walking through the park. Box (48) 1961.

I'M A MODERN woman, with average good looks; slim, elegant and cultured. I'm strong, yet gentle and caring, active in homemaking, politics and the arts. If you're an unattached, clever, socialist man around 55, who wants a delightfully serious relationship, with someone of similar age please write. It could be beautiful. Box (48) 1990.

LEICESTER WOMAN (33), single, presentable, solvent, professional background, enjoys wide variety of intellectual and moronic activities. Looking for similar man, for whatever happens next. Box (48)1962.

LONDON BASED graduate, 56, personable, sensitive, sense of humour, solvent, seeks lady companion, non-smoker, 40-55, for holidays in Europe, South America, India, Greek Island hopping — wherever. Expenses shared. Box (48) 1966.

LONDON: HAPPY positive lady, 41, slim, attractive, warm-hearted. Enjoys creative living, achievement, sharing caring. Seeks like-minded, professional type man for honest, stimulating relationship. Box (48) 1977.

LONDON WOMAN, socialist, early fifties, largish, youngish, independent, intelligent, solvent; want to share talking, walking, books, music, countryside, motor-caravanning, travel and future with someone similar. Box (48) 1974.

MALE HISTORY graduate, 24, relatively attractive, sensitive, hard left type, seeks close woman friend, under 29, living in Hants/Surrey/London. Box (47) 1917.

MANCHESTER HAMLET: intelligent, young, 31, believing Luther King dreams, values, ideals, joy, humour, seeks young-in-heart and hopes independent female, for everlasting happiness. Box (48) 1978.

NON-SEXIST, NON-RACIST, non bridge/golf playing, non-smoking, non-emotionally stingy, 53 year-old jazz playing male, working in caring profession, seeks female for mutually committed TLC. London/Middx/Surrey. Box (46) 1893.

NORTH MIDLANDS/NW. If you're female, over 45, interested to discover whether sixties can still be exciting, you might care to have lunch and discuss. I'd love to invite you. Box (48) 1963.

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PROFESSIONAL MALE, 33, fair and slim, believes in kindness and Romance, seeks attractive woman/single mother, for friendship sharing. Hampshire area. Box (48) 1964.

SOUTH LONDON man (39), enjoys theatre, cinema, music, walking, the great outdoors; seeks like-minded woman, to share these pleasures and for mutual support. Box (48) 1973.

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WARM, ATTRACTIVE, humorous (Jewish) woman, 35, lover of music, literature, cinema, theatre and leftish politics, seeks man of similar inclinations, to share it all with. London. Box (46) 1899.

WARM, PLATONIC friend sought by companionable sensitive, free thinking lady, youthful 50, many balanced interests/ideas, active, intelligent; music, travel, animal, good conversation lover. South. Box (48) 1975.

WEST YORKSHIRE: professional female, 35, vegetarian, interests include: music, outdoors, gardening, travel, home, seeks male, 30-40, for caring friendship. Box (48) 1960.

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AGENDA

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FRI 29 NOV

Science, Technology and the New Cold War. Star Wars, Gender and the Arms Race, Nuclear Winter, Third World. Speakers include Owen Greene, Penny Strange, Peter Tatchell. 2-6pm at Queen Elizabeth College, Campden Hill Road, W8. N.B. This is a change of venue. Details BSSRS 01-607 9615.

SAT 30 NOV

'DEATH IN THE CITY' Melisa Benn and Ken Worpole will speak about their new book on deaths in custody, at the inquest AGM 12.00-5.00. Red Rose Centre, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7. Details: 01-802 7430

LABOUR SOCIAL SECURITY CAMPAIGN AGM. Sheffield Town Hall, Surrey Street, 10.45-4pm. A DAY OF DISCUSSIONS AND WORKSHOPS ON SOCIAL SECURITY CAMPAIGNING. Details: 01-737 4409.

'STAR WARS' Speakers School. St Francis Hall, Birmingham University. 10-5.30pm. Plus Evening Public Meeting at Council Chamber, Guild of Students, Birmingham University, at 7.30pm. Speakers: E. P. Thompson and Dr Michael Rowan-Robinson (Dept of Mathematics, Queen Mary's College). For further information contact the organisers, National CND, West Midlands Region. Ring 021-643 4617 Mon-Fri 10-6.

SAT 30 NOV-SUN 1 DEC

'ALIVE & WELL?' Weekend on Politics of Health organised by CPGB. Liverpool. Disabled access. Creche & accommodation available (week's notice). Details: Steve Munby, 35 Kelvin Grove, Liverpool 8.

MON 2 DEC

BENEATH THE WHITE COAT: seminars on science and politics organised by the **British Society for Social Responsibility in Science.** This week *Andrew Hodges*, Author 'Alan Turing: The Enigma of Intelligence'. 'ALAN TURING: VICTIM OR HERO OF BRITISH INTELLIGENCE?' 8.00pm. Adam's Arms, Conway Street, London W1. (Tube: Warren Street).

WED 4 DEC

CROWD. Campaign for the Right of Assembly and Dissent. Meeting at Camden Town Hall, Basement Study Rooms, 7.30pm. All those interested in opposition to the White Paper on Public Order should attend.

TEN FEMINIST WRITERS READ AND DISCUSS. Sheba Feminist Publishers celebrate their first five years. Writers include: Suniti Namjoshi, Moy McCrory, Barbara Buford, Terlie McNeil. 8pm, Drill Hall Arts Centre, 16 Chenies Street, WC1. Good access. Tickets £2 waged, £1 unwaged. Box office 01-637 8270.

LABOUR PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION 'Northern Ireland -- The Agreement. Thatcherite Interference or Historic Moment?' Speaker: Clive Soley MP. Committee Room 7, House of Commons at 7.30pm.

WED 4 — THURS 5 DEC

NEW FORMS OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT. TCPA Annual Conference to be held in Swansea. Details: Sally Scarlett, TCPA, 17 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1. 01-930 8903.

SUN 8 DEC

A. MANCHANDA

1919-1985 Memorial Meeting

Tribute to the late revolutionary teacher, leader and fighter against all forms of imperialism and oppression.

Sunday 8 December, 2pm
Commonwealth Hall
Royal Commonwealth Society
16-20 Craven Street, London WC2
(Charing Cross).

TUES 10 DEC

CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON LABOUR'S ARTS POLICY. Speaker: Norman Buchan, Shadow Spokesman on Arts. 8 p.m. Berkshire Shire Hall, Reading (off junction 11, M4). Organised by Berkshire & South Oxon Fabian Society.

7.30pm OLD TOWN HALL, CARLISLE. James Cutler (Yorkshire TV) will show his new film **'The British Bomb'.** Organised by Carlisle City Council, A NFZ.

SAT 14 DEC

BRIEFING ON PUBLIC ORDER BILL at Congress House. Starts 1.15pm. Speakers: Gareth Pierce and Jack Dromey (unconfirmed), followed by Discussion groups/advice/suggestion sessions. First showing of Public Order Policing exhibition (PORG). Organised by Public Order Research Group, SE Region TUC and Greater London Association of Trades Councils. For further information phone Cathie Lloyd 01-734 5831.

WED 18 DEC

MARXISM TODAY CHRISTMAS CABARET FOR THE ANC, with The Flying Pickets, Happy End, Pauline Melville, Blah!, Skint Video, Benjamin Zephaniah Band, The Electric Ballroom, Camden. Prompt start 7.30pm. £5/£3 unwaged. Reservations 01-608 0265.

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WED 18 DEC-THURS 19 DEC

ANNUAL CONFERENCE of World University Service (UK) *'Adult Education: Empowering the People'.* Conference will explore the potential of adult education for developing alternatives for those marginalised by formal programmes. Discussion will focus on comparing British and South African experience. Venue: Reading University. Registration (including food and accommodation) £32.50. Details from WUS, 20 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN (tel: 01-226 6747).

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AGENDA

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MISANTHROPIC MUSINGS: PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

WHAT A DAY, NO SOONER HAD I ESCAPED FROM THE FPA THAN I GOT FLASHED AT BY A BLOKE ON THE BUS
SURELY THERE'S NO CONNECTION?
NOT REALLY, BUT I COULDN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT IF MEN HAD TO LIE ABOUT HALF NAKED, LEGS IN STIRRUPS, THEIR WILLIES POKED WITH COLD STEEL INSTRUMENTS BEING CLOSELY QUESTIONED ABOUT THEIR SEX LIVES, SURROUNDED BY TEN SMIRKING MEDICAL STUDENTS
THEIR PROPENSITY FOR EXHIBITIONISM MIGHT BE GREATLY REDUCED!
STEVE TAYLOR

CHESS
Shades of Tal

WHO WAS the last world champion who failed to regain his title when given a return match by a conquering challenger? The answer is: Steinitz, against Lasker in 1896. Admittedly, such second chances have not been granted all that often. But Alekhine-Euwe 1937, Botvinnik-Smyslov 1958 and Botvinnik-Tal 1961 make up a rather ominous set of historical precedents for Kasparov.

In style Gary Kasparov is not at all like either Euwe or Smyslov. Some parallels, however, may be drawn with Mikhail Tal. Tal was only twenty-three when he beat Botvinnik in 1960, a youth record that Kasparov has just pipped by a few months. The young Tal was, like the new champion, an exciting and inspiring player. His games, abounding in surprise tactical shots and a generous disregard for material, were a manifesto for adventure and daring attack. Peter Clarke produced a lovely book of Tal's best games. Board six in the school team at the time, I was bowled over by it. I think lots of other young players must have made him their hero. Our ambition in those days was to play like Tal.

Botvinnik's revenge came as a terrible disappointment, as if the old order had suddenly cancelled the brave new world. But we knew that Tal had not let us down. It was his body that had failed him. For years Tal was in and out of hospital receiving treatment for a chronic kidney condition. In this respect, at least, let us hope there is no parallel.

It took so long for Tal to return to anything like a healthy state, after the removal of one of his kidneys, that by then he was no longer young and not nearly so daring. There were still flashes of the old brilliance, and in one purple patch in 1972-3 he could do no wrong. But Tal was now a middle-aged GM and was starting to play like one. A new generation was on the scene and time had passed Tal by.

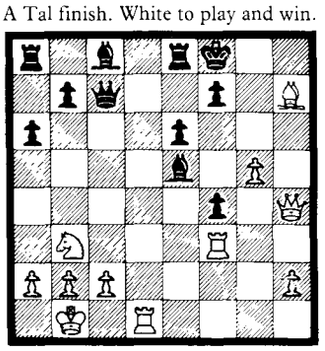
Or so it seemed. At the Montpellier candidates the darling of long-suffering old fans did his stuff again. Two games were particularly evocative of bygone swashbuckling. One was a dazzling miniature against that other battle-scarred veteran, Korchnoi. The other was against Zoltan Ribli.

Ribli-Tal, Montpellier 1985. Reti Opening.
1. Nf3 d5 2. g3 Bg4 3. Bg2 c6 4. b3 Nd7 5. Bb2 Ngf6 6. 0-0 e6 7. d3 Bc5 The opening is a nice contrast between Ribli's hypermodernism and Tal's simple, direct development. **8. Nbd2 0-0 9. e4 dxe4 10. dxe4 e5 11. h3 Bxf3 12. Qxf3 Qe7 13. Radl b5 14. h4 a5 15. c3 Nb6 16. Rfel? Qe6 17. Qf5 Ng4** Tal strikes at the f2 weakness created by Ribli's 14th and 16th moves. **18. Re2 Rad8 19. Bf3 Rd3!** Tal's shock tactic: 20. Bxg4 Rxg3+. **20. Kg2 Nxf2! 21. Rxf2 Bxf2 22. Kxf2 Qd6 23. Bcl g6 24. Qg5 f6 25. Qh6 f5 26. Kg2 Rxf3!** Decisive, since 27. Kxf3 Qd3+ is killing. **27. Nxf3 Qxdl 28. Ng5 and 0-1** as 28...Qd7 wins easily.

Both Kasparov and Tal excel at blitz chess, as you would expect given their tactical skills. Yet the similarities only go so far. The star pupil of Botvinnik's chess school could not be adequately described as a new Tal! Kasparov's imagination has been disciplined, he is more objective, not prone to go in for adventures for their own sake. This time it will not be easy for the defeated champion to find a weakness to exploit.

Problem

A Tal finish. White to play and win.



Solution

1. Rxf4! Bxf4 2. Qh6+ Ke7 3. Qf6+ Kf8 4. g6 (threatening g7 mate) **Bh6 5. Rf1! 1-0.** The threat is Qxf7+ and if 5...Rd8 6. Qh8+ Ke7 7. Rxf7+ Kd6 8. Qd4+ Kc6 9. Qc5 mate. From Tal-Shamkovich, USSR Ch. 1972.

George Botterill

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QUIZ

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2) Who said of whom last week: 'Some people have the impression my father can't maintain himself in a one-to-one with someone'?
3) Who said last week that he wouldn't yet announce his candidacy for the Republican nomination in 1988 because 'I don't want to be pushed prematurely into a lame-duck status'?
4) Michael Somare resigned as Prime Minister of which country last week?
5) Where did the CBI hold its annual conference last week?
6) Where did the National Front hold their annual general meeting last week?
7) Which television performer who died recently presented a long-running programme called *Picture Page*?
8) Which television performer who died recently starred in a long-running series called *You'll Never Get Rich*?

Answers

1) Reagan and Gorbachev; 2) Ron Reagan Junior on his dad; 3) Alexander Haig; 4) Papua New Guinea; 5) Harrogate; 6) National Liberal Club, London; 7) Leslie Mitchell; 8) Phil Silvers

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